
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 December 2020

by S Leonard BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/20/3259895
15 Bridge Close, Bursledon SO31 8AN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Chris Bunce against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref H/20/87956, dated 4 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is raise ridge height and addition of dormer window to northwest side elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above is taken from the decision notice. It more accurately and succinctly describes the development than the descriptions within the application form and the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a modest, attractive, detached bungalow with brick walls under a tiled hipped roof, incorporating a tall brick feature chimney on one side. It is located within a residential close which is characterised by similarly designed bungalows. The bungalows are generally highly visible within the street scene, due to site frontages which are either open or defined by low walls. The prevailing roofscape within the close is simple and uncluttered, with properties having retained their original hipped roof form. The road has a spacious nature due to a combination of modest sized properties, clean hipped roof forms and open site frontages.
5. Notwithstanding that there is some variety in dwelling design, fully hipped roofs and consistent roof pitches provide a strong sense of uniformity and rhythm within the street scene. Roof ridge heights are similar, following the sloping nature of the road. The degree of consistency of dwelling design and materials throughout the road makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The appeal property is sited in a visually prominent position within the road, being near a bend, on elevated land relative to the road entrance, and directly opposite a large area of open greenspace.
7. The proposed side dormer window would occupy a considerable amount of the side roof slope, and would dominate this particular part of the roof due to its width and depth and position adjacent to the roof eaves and in close proximity to the roof ridge. The over-dominant and incongruous nature of the dormer structure would be accentuated by a large area of blank façade around the windows, and the positioning of the windows off centre and near the top of the structure. Accordingly, the proposal would have a materially harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host property.
8. The dormer would be highly visible within the street scene. It would appear as a bulky and discordant addition to the roof, drawing the eye, and detracting from the existing simple symmetry of the roof form and eroding the spacious surrounds of the building. This, coupled with the proposed increase in roof height and pitch, would result in a material change to the overall appearance of the building, so that it would stand out as incongruous in relation to the shallow depth roofs and roof pitches and simple, uncluttered hipped roof slopes characteristic of the building and the street as a whole.
9. This impact would not be off-set by the position of no.14 at a slightly higher ground level than the appeal site, since the existing uniformity of roof height and design is perceived within the townscape, notwithstanding the sloping topography of the street. Furthermore, the position of the appeal property at a higher ground level than that of no.16 and set further forward than that property, would serve to emphasis the impact of the proposed increase in roof bulk and height, when viewed from the public realm.
10. My attention has been drawn to a recently approved scheme for extensions to 13 Bridge Close. On the basis of the evidence before me, there appears to be notable differences between the approved development and the appeal scheme, including the absence of any side dormer windows. As such, the two schemes are not directly comparable. In any event, I must determine the appeal having regard to the appeal site circumstances, and the merits of the scheme before me.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Saved Policy 59.BE of the *Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001 – 2011* (2009), Emerging Policy DM1 of the Submitted *Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036)* (2018) and Character Area BHH 21 of the *Character Area Appraisals Bursledon, Hamble-le-Rice and Hound Supplementary Planning Document* (2008). These policies and guidance, amongst other aims, require new developments to be of a good design, take full and proper account of the context of the site, including the character and appearance of the locality, be appropriate in scale, design and siting in themselves and in relation to adjoining buildings, and maintain the uniformity in building heights within the street.
12. For similar reasons, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2019), which seek to secure high quality design as set out in Chapter 12.

Other Matters

13. The appellant has drawn my attention to the lack of objection to the proposal from neighbours. However, this does not affect my decision in respect of this appeal, which I must determine on the merits of the proposed development before me.
14. I have noted the history of refused planning applications in respect of the appeal site, and that the appellant has altered the proposal having regard to the previous decisions, including reducing the proposed roof height. However, this does not alter my findings in respect of the current scheme.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Leonard

INSPECTOR