
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2020

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/20/3258560

64 Canterbury Avenue, Southend-on-Sea SS2 4QL

- 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 Grant Dennison against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00731/FULH, dated 10 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as the erection of a two story side extension set back from the original house. The roof will be same angle and height as the original house to front and rear as to accommodate the solar panels (other houses in area have side extensions level with the original house). The original house has had 100mm insulation and a render finish, painted in sandstone brown under permitted development. The side extension will have rendered finish painted in sandstone brown same as the original house. (other house's have render and pebble dash finish in area).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The proposed development appears to be largely complete. The side extension and external alterations are broadly as shown on the drawings, save for a first floor front window, which is in place and is not shown on the plans.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a mainly 2-storey semi-detached house, which lies within an estate style residential area wherein dwellings are similar in style and age with some differences in size and general appearance. It occupies a prominent plot at the corner of Canterbury Avenue and Lincoln Chase. As a result, all 3 elevations of No 64 are visible from the road albeit screened to some extent by the existing fence that marks the boundary of the site.
5. A 2-storey side addition with a dual pitched roof and rendered walls has been introduced that effectively elongates the main house. The Council appears to raise no objection to this element of the appeal scheme apart from the fenestration or to the parking arrangements proposed at the front of the site. From the submitted evidence, I have no reason to disagree. I shall, therefore,

focus on the new windows and the alterations sought to the elevations of the enlarged house.

6. Frameless windows with single panes have been installed to each of the main elevations that markedly contrast with the more traditional framed windows in nearby properties, despite some variation in the type and colour of frames and the subdivision of the glazing. These features, coupled with the expanse of blank wall where some of the previous openings in the elevations have been infilled, accentuate the differences between the finished dwelling and the broadly uniform character and appearance of nearby dwellings. This rather abrupt contrast is most pronounced when seen from Canterbury Avenue, in both directions, and from just in front of the site. From each of these locations, the style of the fenestration and the resultant elevations gives an incongruous and uncharacteristic appearance to the appeal dwelling.
7. The appellant has suggested that a wooden frame could be glued around the edge of the windows concerned to more closely reflect the fenestration of nearby properties. However, the visual effect of this arrangement would be unconvincing and contrived given that differences would still remain between the appeal scheme and the fenestration of other properties notably in the lack of detailing and the use of single glazed units.
8. Planning policy at all levels welcomes innovative design. This point was acknowledged by a previous appeal Inspector in his consideration of a different proposal at this location. However, that policy support is qualified. The National Planning Policy Framework, for instance, requires development to add to the overall quality of an area and be sympathetic to local character. Policy DM3 of the Council's Development Management Document (DMD) notes that new development should enhance the character of the original building and the surrounding area. As the appeal scheme would not do so, the balance of planning policy is tipped firmly against it.
9. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy, DMD Policies DM1 and DM3 and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 1 *Design and Townscape Guide*. These policies and guidance aim to ensure that new development contributes to a high quality urban environment and achieves a high standard of design or quality.
10. The appellant states that local residents support the application and that the triple glazed windows will improve the environmental performance of the dwelling primarily by reducing heat loss. Government policy encourages measures that promote energy efficiency. However, these considerations do not overcome the harm that I have identified.
11. The appellant states that he is willing to amend the scheme to secure planning permission by, for instance, splitting the windows or gluing wooden frames to them. However, my remit is solely to determine the development sought.
12. For the reasons set out above, and taking into account the absence of objections from others, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR