
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/20/3258161

77 Churchfields, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea SS3 8TN

- 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 Nathan Rose against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00641/FULH, dated 8 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a 2-storey extension to side, single storey extension to rear, conversion of existing loft, internal alterations and extend existing crossover.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the erection of a 2-storey extension to side, single storey extension to rear, conversion of existing loft, internal alterations.
2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to extend existing crossover at 77 Churchfields, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea SS3 8TN in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/00641/FULH, dated 8 April 2020.

Procedural matter

3. The proposed extension to the vehicle crossover appears to be in place. It broadly reflects the details shown on the submitted Site Plan.

Main issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached house with a single storey garage and conservatory at one side. It is located within an estate style residential area within which dwellings are similar in age and general style although vary in type, size and detailing. The proposal includes a 2-storey side addition that would, in effect, elongate the 2-storey house with a new gable end and external materials to match those of the existing dwelling.
6. By almost doubling the width of the 2-storey house, the proposal would noticeably add to the scale and mass of the host building that in turn would increase its prominence in the local street scene. When seen from the road, in

- both directions, the finished building would draw the eye because it would appear far wider and more substantial than other properties in the same row as No 77 that retain their original form, which includes a single storey garage at the side. This new built form would also disrupt the balance and symmetry between No 77 and its attached counterpart as a broadly matching pair.
7. With the 2-storey house extending across much of the plot's width and a new gable end close to the site's side boundary, the proposal would noticeably diminish the space around the side of the building. Even with a modest gap left between the new flank wall and the boundary fence, and a reasonable sized back garden, the finished building would appear unduly confined within the site given its considerable width. This impression would be most pronounced from Churchways just to the west of the site and from footway that runs to the side of the appeal property. In combination, these aspects of the proposal would cause it to be obtrusive and detrimental to the area's visual character.
 8. I appreciate that introducing a set back to the main walls and a set down to the ridge would have implications for the appearance of the finished house and the internal accommodation to be provided. However, the absence of these features emphasises the considerable scale and bulk of the completed dwelling. This approach runs counter to advice within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 1 *Design and Townscape Guide* (SPD). The SPD explains that the purpose of applying these requirements is to ensure that the extension does not overbear or dominate the original property.
 9. As a local builder, the appellant says that he has regularly carried out extensions to other properties that are similar to that proposed. In those circumstances, I can understand that the process may feel unfair if some schemes come forward and others raise concern and are denied from doing so as a result. However, in my experience, it is rare that direct parallels can be drawn between one development and another because their particular circumstances will often differ. Furthermore, each development should be assessed on its own merits, as I have done.
 10. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed 2-storey extension 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 SPD. 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. It is also at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that development should add to the overall qualities of an area.
 11. Once complete, the proposed extensions would provide additional living accommodation and enable the layout of the house to be reconfigured that would improve the living conditions of the appellant and his family. No objections have been received from local residents and a good-sized garden would remain with the new built form in place. While all of these considerations support the appeal, they do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.
 12. The Council raises no objection to the proposed vehicle crossover providing access to the hard surface area at the front of No 77 from the highway. I, too, find this element of the appeal scheme acceptable. It complies with the policies of the Council that aim to ensure adequate off-road parking and

promote safety. Unlike the single storey rear extension and other alterations to the dwelling, this component of the proposal is clearly severable to the proposed side extension, which is objectionable. Therefore, I am able to issue a split decision that grants planning permission solely for it.

13. As the vehicle crossover appears to be in place and it is compliant with the submitted drawings there is no need for the standard time limit and plans conditions. No other conditions are necessary in this regard.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed in part and allowed in part.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR