



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 November 2020

by Julie Dale Clark BA (Hons) DipTP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31/12/2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/W/20/3252236

43 Ash Road, Canvey Island SS8 7EA

- 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 Mick Adams against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0039/FUL, dated 20 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolish existing bungalow and construct a pair of semi-detached four bedroom properties with associated facilities.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issues is the effect of the proposed new dwellings on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. At the time of my site visit the appeal site was a cleared site within a row of residential properties. To the east is a fairly substantial detached two storey house with accommodation in its roof space, No 45 Ash Road plus another similar house beyond that. To the west is a more modest detached dormer style detached house, No 41 Ash Road.
4. Local Plan Policy EC2¹ indicate that a high standard of design will be expected throughout the Borough. The text accompanying the policy explains that in a relatively densely urbanised area such as Castle Point, it is particularly important to ensure that a high quality of design is achieved in order to maintain an environment that is visually attractive and retains a sense of place and identity. The policy sets out criteria for new development which includes, amongst other things, its appropriateness to its setting which should not harm the character of its surroundings. This is consistent with the importance of good design as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework². The Council's Residential Design Guidance SPD³ sets out guidance on plot sizes for new development (RDG1) and advice on parking and access (RDG12).

¹ Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan Written Statement, Adopted 17 November 1998

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019.

³ Castle Point Residential Design Guidance Adoption Statement, Adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, 1 January 2013 (SPD).

5. The area is characterised by different styles of dwellings and the design of the proposed houses would not be dissimilar to the neighbouring detached house to the east, No 45 and its neighbour. However, whilst No 45 is a single dwelling, the proposal on this plot is for two fairly narrow houses. They would be substantial in height, effectively providing three floors of living accommodation and whilst their overall bulk would be similar to No 45 this would be sub-divided into two narrow houses. The narrowness of the houses would visually be accentuated by their height.
6. Parking in front of houses is not uncharacteristic in the area but each of the houses either side of the appeal site have garages which would allow cars to be garaged rather than depend wholly on frontage parking. The immediate neighbouring houses are also wider than each of the proposed houses so there is space for boundary walls and potential for landscaping. Almost the entire frontages of the proposed houses would be taken up with hardsurfacing and dropped kerbs to allow cars to park. There is no scope for boundary treatment and little scope for soft landscaping. This adds to the overall cramped appearance of the proposed dwellings.
7. In summary, I consider that the combined height of the proposed dwellings, their respective narrowness and the dominance of hardsurfacing for parking in front of the houses themselves cumulatively would create a cramped form of development that would have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the area.
8. I have considered the other examples of approved development allowed in the area but these do not convince me that allowing this proposal would be acceptable. I also note that the Council have been unable to provide sufficient land to meet its requirement for the supply of housing and I note the issues facing development on Canvey Island with regard to flooding. I also appreciate that it is important for the area to evolve and new development should be encouraged where it is sustainable and in line with national policy. However, whilst these matters warrant serious consideration, I cannot accept that they justify a proposal which I consider to be otherwise harmful.
9. I therefore have considered all matters raised but none alter my conclusion. I conclude that the proposed two dwellings would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would conflict with Local Plan Policy EC2 and SPG RDG1 and RDG12 and fail to meet the standards promoted in the Framework.
10. I conclude that the proposed new dwellings would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and therefore the appeal fails.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR