

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 December 2020

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B1550/D/20/3259871

23 Chelmer Avenue, Rayleigh, SS6 7TB

- 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 Ms Sue Gomm against the decision of Rochford District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00432/FUL, dated 14 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is additional front dormer and extension of existing rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached bungalow in a residential area. It has been extended to include first floor accommodation and features two small front-facing dormers and a rear dormer. The property has been extended to the side and rear at ground floor level.
 4. The appeal property is located in a prominent corner position along Chelmer Avenue, which is a residential street largely characterised by the presence of detached and semi-detached bungalows, some with dormers. Number 21, which neighbours the appeal property to one side, is a taller dormer bungalow; whilst Number 25, which adjoins the appeal property to the other side, appears as a simple bungalow which has retained much of its original character.
 5. Houses in the area tend to be set back from the street behind short garden and/or parking areas and have longer gardens to the rear. The set back from the road, the presence of gardens, the generally low heights of buildings and the presence of gaps between buildings all combine to provide for a spacious and relatively green local character.
 6. During my site visit, I observed that, whilst many dwellings have been altered and/or extended, such changes generally respect the host property and appear in keeping with the surrounding area.
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7. I also observed during my site visit that the area's roofscape appears largely unaltered, but for the presence of occasional dormers, which generally appear unobtrusive.
8. The proposed development to the front roof slope would effectively comprise one large front dormer formed of three pitched roofs that would be linked to one another by sloping roof sections. This would extend across the majority of the width of the roof, which would itself, be extended to the side so as to allow for the dormer to the rear to be extended.
9. In contrast to the more discrete appearance of the existing front dormers, the proposal would create a very large, bulky and incongruous extension to the front of the appeal property. It would appear in stark contrast to the simple roof form of the attached dwelling, No 25, leading the two attached dwellings to appear severely unbalanced.
10. Further to the above, the combined effect of the overwhelming size and the somewhat awkward form of the proposed front dormer extension would result in the roof appearing top-heavy, leading it to appear unduly dominant in its surroundings. As such, the proposal would draw attention to itself as an incongruous feature and this would be to the detriment of the surrounding area's attributes.
11. Taking the above into account, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. This is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Development Management Plan¹ Policy DM1; to Core Strategy² Policy CP1; and to the Council's SPD2³, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

12. In support of the proposal, the appellant draws my attention to needs relating to health and family circumstances. I note and am sympathetic to these, but they do not amount to matters that outweigh the harm identified.
13. Also in support of the proposal, the appellant draws my attention to other, different developments elsewhere. However, the information before me does not provide detailed evidence to demonstrate that all of the circumstances relating to each of these are so similar to the proposal before me as to provide for direct comparison.
14. Notwithstanding this, I have found that the proposed development will result in harm to local character and this harm is not something that is lessened by the presence of other developments elsewhere.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

¹ Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan (2014).

² Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted Version (2011).

³ Rochford District Council Supplementary Planning Document 2, Housing Design (2007).