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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2020

**by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 11 January 2021**

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## **Appeal Reference: APP/B1550/D/20/3261269**

### **74 Wyburns Avenue, Rayleigh SS6 7QU**

- 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 and Mrs Wilson against the decision of Rochford District Council.
  - The application (reference 20/00459/FUL, dated 22 May 2020) was refused by notice dated 27 July 2020.
  - The development proposed is described in the application form as “two storey side extension, loft conversion with front and rear dormer windows”.
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## **Decision**

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## **Main issue**

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

## **Reasons**

3. Wyburns Avenue is located within an extensive residential suburb of Rayleigh. The residential development is laid out along the frontages of the Avenue in a conventional layout and is characterised by bungalows and houses, typically in semi-detached pairs. There is some variety in the designs, which include symmetrical and asymmetrical pairs, but this is subject to a consistent architectural vocabulary. The architectural language is dominated by pitched roofs though some house types are in the form of chalet bungalows, with flat-roofed dormers inserted into the front roof slopes. In a number of cases, the original designs have been modified as a result of alterations and extensions that have been carried out over the years.
4. Number 74 Wyburns Avenue is one of a small group of dwellings that are clustered around the end of the cul-de-sac and it has a wedge-shaped plot, as a consequence of the geometry of the layout. It forms one of a pair of bungalows, with number 76, and has a narrow road frontage, widening to a more generous private garden at the back of the plot. There is a gap between the house and its side boundary, providing access to a free-standing garage

that is set back from the front of the bungalow. This narrow access widens out, however, to create additional space between the garage and the side of the bungalow.

5. It is now proposed that the bungalow should be substantially expanded, by the addition of a side extension and the construction of large flat-roofed dormers to both the front and rear roof slopes.
6. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (which was revised in February 2019) emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, which includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation in new development.
7. An emphasis on the importance of good design is also to be found in the Development Plan. Thus, Policy CP1 of the 'Local Development Framework Core Strategy' (dated December 2011) seeks to achieve "good, high quality design". Similarly, Policies DM1 and DM3 of the 'Local Development Framework Development Management Plan' (adopted on 16 December 2014) are also aimed at achieving good design, with special reference to schemes for "infilling or residential intensification".
8. The Council's 'Supplementary Planning Document 2 (Housing Design)' (dated January 2007) and the 'Essex Design Guide' (2018 Edition) are also relevant, though they do not have the same force as Policies in the Development Plan. Again, they seek to encourage high design standards.
9. The residential estate exhibits a number of house types and two-storey dwellings are not out of keeping in principle. In this case, the finished building would not be unduly overbearing or overshadowing in relation to its neighbours and it would provide a good standard of living accommodation for future occupants.
10. Nevertheless, the resulting architectural design would be awkward and ungainly. The proposed new dormers would extend across the main roof slopes at the front and rear and would dominate the structure, obscuring the original pitched roof design. The dormers would be too large and clumsy in terms of their visual impact and would spoil the character and appearance of the host building.
11. The front dormer in particular would be obtrusive in the streetscene and would cause real harm to the character and appearance of the surroundings. It is acknowledged that some flat roofed dormers are to be found in the original designs of some of the chalet bungalows in the vicinity but these are entirely different in scale and character and have been designed to be an integral part of the design, in harmony with the development scheme as a whole. By contrast, the proposed front dormer at number 74 would retain little of the pitched roof plane and would dominate the front elevation.
12. I accept that the proposed extension would be a useful addition to the accommodation at 74 Wyburns Avenue but, nevertheless, I am convinced that the harm that would be done to the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings outweighs the benefits of the project. Hence, I

have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with both national and local planning policies (including the Development Plan) and that it ought not to be allowed. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

*Roger C Shrimplin*

INSPECTOR