



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 February 2021

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V1505/D/20/3261583
17 & 19 Abbey Road, Billericay, CM12 9NF

- 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 Pigney & Judge against the decision of Basildon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/00962/FULL, dated 20 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing main roofs to both properties, forming new roof with ridge 1m higher and new cat slide dormers to front and rear to form first floor chalet bungalow including rear ground floor infill extension to No.19 and ground floor extension infills to both properties upto existing building line.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for removal of existing main roofs to both properties, forming new roof with ridge 1m higher and new cat slide dormers to front and rear to form first floor chalet bungalow including rear ground floor infill extension to No.19 and ground floor extension infills to both properties upto existing building line at 17 & 19 Abbey Road, Billericay, CM12 9NF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00962/FULL, dated 20 July 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1156/PP01.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the first floor windows on the side elevations have been fitted with obscure glazing. Details of the type of obscure glazing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the windows are installed and once installed the obscured glazing shall be retained thereafter.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:

- The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and
- The effect of the proposal on highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal relates to a pair of semi-detached bungalows sited on the eastern side of Abbey Road. The existing dwellings are of a handed design with mirrored hip-roofed front projections and a hipped roof design. The proposal involves infilling the recessed area between the existing front hip-roofed projections and raising the ridge height of the dwellings to a pitch roof with gable ends. Catslide dormers are proposed on the front and rear elevations which would be set in from both sides and would be balanced across the elevations. Rear additions are also proposed.
4. The surrounding area is mixed in character and appearance, comprising of mainly of semi-detached bungalows, chalets and two storey dwellings. There is therefore a wide variety of building heights within the street. Furthermore, many of the dwellings in Abbey Road and adjacent roads have been extended and altered, including front and rear dormer additions of various sizes and styles which form part of the character of the area.
5. Given the mixed character of the area and the variety of building heights, the proposed raising of the ridge height of the dwellings and the provision of side gables would not be out of keeping with the street scene where similar roof forms are displayed. The infilling of the gap in between the front projecting elements would, whilst making the dwellings more slightly more prominent overall, also reflect the existing street scene where many properties are located relatively close to the road.
6. The proposed catslide dormers on the front and rear elevations would be balanced and would appear as an integral element of the roof design. There are a variety of dormer styles in the local area, including catslide dormers. The proposed dormers would be set in from the flank elevation of the dwellings and whilst sloping down from the ridge, would not represent an unduly prominent or incongruous feature. Whilst I note the Council's preference for bonnet dormers on the front elevation, in this instance given the balanced and integrated nature of the dormers I do not consider that they would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
7. In conclusion on this issue, the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would comply with Policy BAS BE12 of the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007 (LP) and the National Planning Policy Framework which together require development to be of a high quality, to reflect local distinctiveness and not to cause harm to the character of the surrounding area.

Highway safety

8. The Council refer to the Essex County Council's 'Parking Standards Design and Good Practice' (September 2009) which states that a dwelling with 2+ bedrooms should have a minimum vehicle parking provision of 2 spaces per dwelling (each space 5.5m x 2.9m). This standard excludes garages if less than 7m x 3m internal dimensions. The existing bungalows are shown to have three bedrooms and there is no requirement for additional parking spaces to be provided as a result of the enlarged living accommodation when assessed against the parking standards.
9. Parking is currently available on the frontages and driveways of both properties. The Council acknowledge that the parking arrangement for No 17 would be unaffected by the proposed extensions. With regard to No 19, there is space on the forecourt for two cars to be parked although these would not comply with the 5.5m x 2.9m dimensions set out in the parking standards.
10. The Council raise the concern that the proposed rear extension to No 19 would impede access to the garage within its rear garden area. However, I noted at my site visit that the garage appears difficult to access and in any event is unlikely to comply with the internal dimensions set out in the parking standards. Whilst the depth of one of the front spaces would be slightly reduced by the infill extension, there would be little material alteration to the present forecourt arrangement overall.
11. I also noted at my site visit that Abbey Road and adjoining roads do not appear to be under pressure for on-street parking. Accordingly, I do not consider that the proposals would result in undue pressure for on-street parking and accordingly, would not have a harmful effect on highway safety. The proposal would comply with Policy BAS BE12 of the LP which states that development must not cause harm in terms of traffic danger and congestion. The proposal would also comply with the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

Other matters

12. With regard to third party representations, whilst the dwellings would be raised in height, this would not be to such an extent that would have a material effect on the amount of light received in neighbouring gardens. Whilst the proposals show a window serving a stairway / landing in the side gables at first floor level these could be obscure glazed to maintain privacy and conditioned accordingly. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Conditions

13. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary for clarity. I have imposed a condition requiring matching materials to ensure a satisfactory external appearance. A condition requiring that the first floor windows in the side elevations are obscure glazed is necessary to protect the privacy of occupiers of the adjacent properties.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR