
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 June 2021

by J J Evans BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/D/21/3275030

9 Maylands, Lime Close, Dibden Purlieu, Southampton SO45 4RD

- 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 Callaghan against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/11463, dated 23 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension; single storey front and side extensions; single storey rear extension; roof alterations and raise ridge height to extend first floor and roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. 9 Lime Close (No 9) is a detached bungalow positioned within a residential area, a characteristic of which is the presence of numerous detached bungalows positioned within generous plots. Many of the dwellings are single storey, with shallow sloping roofs and low eaves. This combined with the centralised spacing of the dwellings within the width of their plots, along with the presence of comparable sized front gardens and deep rear gardens, gives a distinctive identity and spacious appearance to the area.
4. The properties within Lime Close contribute to this local distinctiveness as they form a group of mostly bungalows comprising those within the cul-de-sac and those near to the junction of this road with Lime Walk. Many of these bungalows have been extended, and some have raised roofs. Notwithstanding these changes, the presence of several similar sized and styled bungalows creates a harmonious appearance, with the spacious layout of the area and repeated design features such as shallow roofs, low eaves, and palette of materials, all contributing to this identity.
5. The proposed extensions to No 9 would substantially increase both the depth and height of the building, thereby allowing it to be seen from some distance away above the roofs of nearby bungalows. Due to the location of the property within the cul-de-sac it would be unduly prominent within the area, particularly

as it would be an isolated house amongst the row of bungalows to the southern side of the road. Given the position of the property, the combined effect of the height and depth of the extensions would create a large and bulky building that would harmfully draw the eye.

6. Moreover, the front and rear facing first floor gables would give the building a defined two storey appearance which would be at odds with the modest sizes of the neighbouring bungalows. Whilst there are a variety of roof extensions apparent in nearby properties, No 9 is positioned within a row of bungalows with repeated shallow roofs and low eaves. The design and totality of the extensions would extend the bungalow into what would essentially be a two storey house, thereby making it intrusively different in size and appearance compared to the neighbouring bungalows.
7. Extending across much of the width of the plot, such a large building would have a cramped appearance when compared to nearby bungalows. This, along with the height and bulk of the extended dwelling, would combine to create an incongruous and overbearing juxtaposition upon the modest dimensions of the neighbouring bungalow at 8 Lime Close. Despite the generous size of the plot and that there have been no local objections to the scheme, the extended dwelling would be visually imposing and prominent both within the cul-de-sac and from longer distances away.
8. The provision of soft landscaping within the front garden would contribute towards the verdant nature of the area, and this would be a positive aspect of the scheme. Nevertheless, landscaping cannot be relied on to screen development, and in this case given the size of the extensions planting would have a minimal impact on ameliorating the harm of the scheme.
9. The appellant has referred to a number of other developments in the wider area, including the variety of dwelling types within Lime Walk. The ages, sizes and styles of dwellings in Lime Walk is varied, but within this road including near to its junction with Lime Close there are also examples of bungalows similar to those in the cul-de-sac. I saw at my site inspection that 4 Lime Close (No 4) is very different to the other bungalows in the cul-de-sac. However, this property is at one end of Lime Close, near to other bungalows that have had roof extensions, and as such does not have such a prominent position as No 9.
10. The appellant has also drawn my attention to a permission that exists for extensions to 6 Lime Close (No 6), although works were not evident as having commenced at the time of my visit. Nevertheless, in most cases even those properties within the cul-de-sac that have been extended retain their essential forms and similarities, including remaining legible as extended bungalows. Given this, neither No 4 nor the proposals for No 6 form a binding precedent for the approval of the appeal scheme.
11. There has been a previous permission to extend No 9, albeit from the evidence before me these extensions were very different to the scheme. Whilst the ridge height of the permitted scheme is slightly higher to that of the appeal proposal, the gabled roof of the appeal scheme not only adds to the bulk of the building, but would make a strident and harmful contrast to the shallow sloped roofs of nearby dwellings. Moreover, the scheme before me would have clear legibility as a large two storey house rather than as an extended hipped roofed bungalow.

12. As regards the possibility of implementing permitted development rights to extend the property, it is not the role of an Inspector when dealing with an appeal for planning permission to conduct an exercise as to lawful use and operation in order to decide whether the appellant might be able to rely on permitted development rights as a fallback. Furthermore, in this instance limited information on the nature of alternative operations has been provided to enable a comparison to be made with the appeal scheme, nor has evidence been provided as to the likelihood of such operations being carried out. The weight that I can attribute to any such fallback in this instance is limited.
13. Although the proposal would provide a higher standard of amenity for the appellant and be within an accessible location, such benefits would be modest and would not outweigh the adverse harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, for the reasons given above, the scheme would fail to respect the character and appearance of the area, and this would be contrary to Policy ENV3 of the New Forest District Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy (July 2020), and Policies D1 and D3 of the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan (Oct 2019). These seek amongst other things, development that reflects local character and is sympathetic to its context and adjoining buildings, thereby reflecting objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

14. The appellant has raised concerns regarding the Council's handling of the application, particularly the inconsistency of decision making in the area. Such matters have to be pursued by other means separate from the appeal process and are not for me to consider with regard to the planning considerations of this case.

Conclusion

15. Thus, for the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

J J Evans

INSPECTOR