



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2021

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 July 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/D/20/3264684

33 Greenways, South Benfleet, Benfleet SS7 5EG

- 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 & Mrs Restarick against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0493/FUL, dated 30 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with front & rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Whilst the proposal is for a front and rear dormer, the Council has raised no objection to the rear dormer and I note that there are rear dormers to neighbouring properties. The appellant also states that a rear dormer was part of an approved application for a Certificate of Lawful Development, although no details of this have been submitted. In considering this matter I agree with the Council that the main issue for consideration relates to the proposed front dormer.
3. Since the appeal was submitted the dwelling has incurred considerable fire damage and at the time of my site visit it had no roof and no internal floors. The roofs to both No 33 and the attached semi-detached bungalow were shrouded with plastic sheeting and scaffolding. I was able to view the site with the appellants permission and although badly damaged, I am able to assess the proposal on the basis of my observations on site and the information submitted with the appeal.

Main Issue

4. I consider that the main issue is the effect of the front dormer on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. Dormer windows are a notable feature in the area but the design of the dwellings are not all the same. Many have taller roofs and so the dormers sit within the roof plane. Nos 31 and 33 together with two other pairs of

bungalows to the east form a row of traditional roofed bungalows with no front dormers added.

6. Local Plan Policy EC2¹ indicates that the Council expect a high standard of design in relation to new buildings and extensions with particular regard to scale and design, amongst other things. Development should be appropriate to its setting and not harm the character of its surroundings. The promotion of good design is also a thrust of the National Planning Policy Framework². RDG7 of the Council's Residential Design Guidance³ refers to development to the roof of a property. This indicates that the roof of a dwelling, either built or as extended or altered, should be proportionate to the remainder of the dwelling. Furthermore, the policy indicates that the disruption or loss of symmetry to a pair or group of dwellings, both in terms of roof planes and/or roofscape, will be refused.
7. The dormer would be close to the ridge of the bungalow and although set in from the sides and eaves it would add a dominant feature to the front of the dwelling. Given that No 33 is semi-detached, it would also result in a loss of symmetry between the pair of properties, Nos 31 and 33. No 31 has a roof light in the front roof plane but this does not alter the overall shape or appearance of the roof. Furthermore, the proposal would intrude into the uniform roof plane of the small row of bungalows that No 33 forms a part of. Notwithstanding that dormers are a feature of properties in this area, and the appellant has quoted many such examples, I find that a front dormer on this bungalow would appear prominent and inappropriate to the original style of the dwelling. As such it would conflict with the policies referred to above.
8. Other matters have been raised including the effect of the proposal on the occupiers of the adjoining bungalow but I do not consider that undue harm would arise in this regard. I have considered all other matters raised but none alter my conclusion.
9. I conclude that the proposed front dormer would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and it would conflict with Local Plan Policy EC2, the SPD and the Framework. Therefore, the appeal fails.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR

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 (the Framework).

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