
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 September 2021

by J L Cheesley BA(Hons) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/D/21/3272850

59 Philmead Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5DW

- 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 Steve Miller against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0815/FUL was refused by notice dated 17 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single-storey side, rear extension, garage conversion into games room and hip to gable loft conversion with dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property lies within a primarily residential area of predominately semi-detached chalet bungalows and bungalows. The appeal property is one of the few semi-detached bungalows that has not been converted to a chalet bungalow. A distinct characteristic of the immediate surrounding area is the spacious side setting of these pairs of dwellings. Where there is development in the side gaps this is usually to the rear. I consider these side gaps make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. I note that there are some single-storey side extensions elsewhere in the wider area, but not in the immediate vicinity of the appeal property.
4. The Council's Decision Notice describes the proposal as follows: *demolish existing rear extension and outbuilding and construct single-storey side/rear extension and hip to gable loft conversion including front and rear dormers and replacement detached outbuilding and fenestration alterations*. I note that the outbuilding to the rear has already been demolished.
5. Guidance in RDG2 in the Council's Residential Design Guidance (2013) explains that the space around new development should be informed by the prevailing character of space around dwellings. Where there is a distinct character of

development which creates an exceptionally strong pattern, development must not result in a disruption to this pattern.

6. The proposed single-storey side addition would encroach significantly into the side gap with the adjacent property. Due to the bulk and position of this proposed addition, I consider that it would unacceptably erode the spacious setting of the existing dwelling. This would be to the detriment of the distinct character and appearance of the surrounding area, where the spatial pattern of development would be significantly disrupted.
7. The Council has not raised concern regarding the proposed loft conversion. From my observations, the proposed front and rear dormers would be in keeping with the character and appearance of other properties in the surrounding area. However, as this would not be clearly severable from the proposed side extension, I am not issuing a split decision in this respect.
8. In reaching my conclusion I have had regard to all matters raised. For the reasons stated above I have found that the proposed single-storey side extension would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Thus, the proposal would be contrary to guidance in RDG2 in the Council's Residential Design Guidance and contrary to Saved Policy EC2 in the Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan (1998) where it seeks to ensure new development should be appropriate to its setting.
9. Since the Council made its decision, the National Planning Policy Framework has been revised. It continues to seek high standards of design. I consider saved Policy EC2 to be broadly consistent with the Framework, especially where the Framework seeks to ensure good design.

J L Cheesley

INSPECTOR