

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 March 2022

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th May 2022

Appeal Reference: APP/A1530/D/22/3290339

Land at 2 Gladwin Road Colchester CO2 7HS

- 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 S Egerton against the decision of Colchester Borough Council.
 - The application (reference 212462, dated 5 September 2021) was refused by notice dated 20 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as *"To incorporate roof dormer on western face of principal roof to allow conversion of attic into master bedroom with internal ceiling height of 2.4m: Increase pitch of roof to 39 degrees, raising ridge height by 87cm; Extend principal roof ridge north-south [front to back of building]; Construct new gable at roof level on part rear elevation"*.
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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. The appeal site is located in a suburban area of Colchester, south-west of the commercial centre. The immediate surroundings are primarily residential in character, and Gladwin Road is a residential road off Layer Road, a busy through route (the B1026).
4. There is a variety of house types along Gladwin Road, including detached and semi-detached properties. The buildings include a range of architectural details but the houses are generally traditional in appearance. The surroundings are softened by the existence of trees alongside the road and in some front gardens and the streetscene has a pleasant and harmonious character.
5. Number 2 Gladwin Road is a four-bedroom detached house in the southern frontage of the road. It has a two-storey gabled element facing the road, with a subsidiary wing, also two-storey, and an extension to that, with a reduced ridge height, extending to the side boundary of the plot. The house is mainly

- faced with brickwork with part of the original having a rendered and painted finish and some "Arts and Crafts" detailing.
6. It is now proposed that alterations to the roof should be carried out, to provide additional bedroom and ancillary accommodation at attic level. The changes would include changes to the roof structure itself, including an increase in the roof pitch of the main roof, and the construction of a new dormer.
 7. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' 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 providing good standards of accommodation.
 8. An emphasis on the importance of good design is also to be found in the Development Plan. Policy UR2 of the 'Local Development Framework Core Strategy' (which was adopted in December 2008) is concerned with "built design and character" in general terms. Similarly, Policy DP1 of the 'Local Development Framework Development Policies' (which was adopted in October 2010) is concerned with "Design and Amenity" and emphasises the need for high standards of architectural design, respecting the townscape context. Policy DP13 focusses more specifically on "Dwelling Alterations, Extensions and Replacement Dwellings".
 9. The proposed alterations to the existing pitched roof would involve increasing the pitch and reflecting the front gable on the rear roof slope, where the roof is hipped at present. The new roof slope and the rear gable would have a relatively minor impact on the streetscene and would be in harmony with the character and appearance of the host building and of surrounding buildings.
 10. By contrast, the box dormer on the side slope of the main pitched roof would be entirely alien to the design of the house. The modern style, the rectangular form and the modern material necessary to achieve it (described as "grey siding") would be alien to the form and character of the existing house and would create an awkward and ungainly architectural composition for the finished building.
 11. In consequence, I am convinced that the scheme as a whole would amount to an overly dominant and discordant addition to the existing house and that it would conflict with planning policies (including those of the Development Plan) which are aimed at encouraging good design that is respectful of its surroundings. The development proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings and ought not to be allowed, therefore.
 12. In reaching that conclusion I have taken account of the arguments put forward in support of the scheme, including the fact that some types of domestic extension can be classified as "permitted development" that does not require a specific grant of planning permission. In this case, however, the submissions in relation to such an approach are very limited and I have been able to attach little weight to this argument.
 13. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed development would make a

useful addition to the existing house. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the harm that would be done to the character and appearance of the existing house and to the streetscene outweigh the benefits of the project.

14. 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