

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 May 2022

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/W/21/3281370

87A The Ridgeway, Westcliff-On-Sea SS0 8PX

- 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 Lucas against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00990/FUL, dated 11 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear/side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Reference is made to a previous unsuccessful application for a similar form of development at the appeal property¹. While I note this, the current appeal involves a separate proposal which I have considered on its own merits.
3. The Council refers to a number of alleged shortcomings of the application the subject of this appeal and I acknowledge the appellant's comments on this matter. However, the Council indicates that the proposal has been assessed on the basis of the submitted information and, therefore, I have considered the proposal on the same basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached property, subdivided into two flats, which is located in a residential road of mixed property types. It is situated on a corner plot next to the junction of The Ridgeway and Beach Avenue.
6. Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document

¹ Ref 21/00470/FUL.

(2015) all include requirements relating to high quality design in new development and respect for the character and scale of existing development and the surrounding area.

7. The *Supplementary Planning Document 1, Design and Townscape Guide* (2009) (the SPD) provides more detailed guidance in support of these development plan policies. In particular, Policy DM1 requires that all developments should draw reference from the design principles set out in the SPD, where applicable. With regard to rear extensions, the SPD says that whether or not there are any public views, the design of rear extensions is still important and every effort should be made to integrate them with the character of the parent building, particularly in terms of scale, materials and the relationship with existing fenestration and roof form².
8. The SPD also says that side extensions should be designed to appear subservient to the parent building. This can generally be achieved by ensuring the extension is set back behind the existing building frontage line and that its design, in particular the roof, is fully integrated with the existing property³.
9. The appeal property currently has an open area of side garden with a generous degree of separation between the side elevation and boundary. This mirrors the layout of the property on the opposite side of the road junction. The position of the side elevations of both properties nearest to Beach Avenue is broadly consistent with the front building lines of properties along the avenue. As such, despite the different dwelling designs, there is a good degree of uniformity of layout with an open aspect to the road junction allowing views of the dwellings on Beach Avenue.
10. No 87 has a regular plan form with a modest single storey addition across most of the rear width. The proposed extension would join onto this and would be set well back from the building frontage, as expected by the SPD. However, the extension would be considerably deeper than the existing single storey element and would have a higher roof. As such, despite use of matching materials, the height, depth and off-set to one side means that it would not integrate well with the existing building resulting in an incongruous, irregular built form that would upset the building's existing character and appearance.
11. The extension would also harm the existing open and relatively uniform appearance of the road junction by infilling most of the side garden space and, despite its single storey height, screening some views of Beach Avenue. It would be visible from the road frontage on The Ridgeway and particularly from the rear, due to the upward incline of Beach Avenue. From these views, the incongruous and uncharacteristic appearance of the extension and lack of integration with the host dwelling would be readily apparent. The existence of other additions, such as dormer windows, are not comparable to the effects of the proposed extension, particularly as these features are contained within the rear building line and are better integrated with the host dwelling.
12. Therefore, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed extension would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. As such, it is contrary to Policies KP2 and

² Paragraph 348.

³ Paragraph 351.

CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy, to Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document, and to the SPD, as described above. It is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which promotes good design.

13. The appellant contends that the SPD is relatively dated as it was published in 2009. However, while this pre-dates the Framework the design guidance is not inconsistent with it or the more recent National Design Guide.

Other Matters

14. The appellant contends in support of the appeal that the proposal should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development included in the Framework, particularly as a result of recent Housing Delivery Test outcomes. However, the Framework is clear that the presumption is engaged in such circumstances for applications involving the provision of housing⁴. As the appeal proposal is for an extension to an existing dwelling, the presumption is not engaged.

15. I acknowledge that the appeal property is not subject to any statutory designations and that there were no objections to the proposal. However, these matters do not overcome the harm that has been found and conflict with the development plan.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given it is concluded that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR

⁴ Paragraph 11, footnote 8.