



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2022

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11TH July 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/A2280/D/22/3294062

54 Lakewood Drive, Gillingham ME8 0NS

- 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 Stefan Freeman against the decision of Medway Council.
 - The application Ref MC/21/3445, dated 28 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 February 2022.
 - The proposed development is for construction of a two storey extension to side with the addition of porch to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The descriptions of development in the headings above differs from that used on the Council's decision notice. In Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed from that used by the Council and as such I have used the Council's description to ensure clarity and consistency.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposals upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi detached suburban house of two storey's that occupies a prominent corner plot within Lakewood Drive and the adjoining St Margaret's Drive. I consider that much of the character of the area is defined by a mix of bungalows and two storey housetypes, most of which retain a level of open plan garden areas to their frontages that are separated from the street behind low walls with most houses responding to a generally defined building line.
5. Being on a corner plot the appeal site is especially prominent, this despite the presence of a screen fence running a substantial way around the side of the property. Nevertheless the elevation fronting onto St Margaret's Drive generally respects the set back from the road offered by the majority of

- properties within the area and presents what I would consider is a formal, principal elevation facing in this direction.
6. The proposal would see an extension to this principal elevation extending towards the corner of the plot by around 4.1m. This would create an extra reception room, study and w/c to the ground floor level, with new bedroom above. The existing entrance to the property would be served by a porch fronting onto Lakewood Drive and a large area of what appears to be hardstanding would be proposed to the front being served by a wider opening within the wall here.
 7. In assessing this appeal I give great weight to what I consider is the overriding character and design of the estate here where largely open plan gardens result in properties being set well back from the street edge. Moreover, I consider that there is importance in retaining this open plan appearance as far as possible through responding to the clearly established building lines created through the alignment and positioning of dwellings in the area as well as the setting provided by the properties' front gardens.
 8. The proposal before me however would see a noticeable encroachment over this building line and would also result in an enclosure of this prominent corner of Lakewood Drive and St Margaret's Drive with a two storey extension. The extension would build upon a large area of garden area and thereby erode the open plan character that is defining.
 9. The impact of this extension would therefore be twofold. It would cause harm to the streetscene through added enclosure and a lack of respect for the overriding building line and design aesthetics of the wider estate and it would cause some degree of overdominance over properties to the south through this further enclosure of the corner plot here.
 10. I therefore consider that the proposal before me would be of such adverse size, scale and dominance so as to cause harm to the character and appearance of the area and result in an erosion of what I consider are the overriding characteristics of the streetscene. In light of this I consider that the proposed extensions would be contrary to Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 as well as guidance on good design contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

Conclusion

11. For the reasons above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR