



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 June 2022

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/D/22/3296407

15 Horsham Lane, Upchurch ME9 7AN

- 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 Adrian Long against the decision of Swale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/505502/FULL, dated 11 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2022.
 - The proposed development is for a first floor and rear addition including garage enlargement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on a) the character of the dwelling and the surrounding area; and b) the living conditions of the occupants of 2a Crosier Court in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site relates to a detached bungalow sited on the southern side of Horsham Lane with a driveway and off-street parking to the front. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature with no prevailing architectural style; the neighbourhood is characterised by dwellings of various size, design and detailing.
4. The scheme comprises a number of elements. I note that the Council does not object in principle to the increase in the height of the roof and the hip-to-gable alterations, and I have no reason to disagree. At the front, the Authority considers the front extension to the garage, the changes to its roof and the new porch to be acceptable, and once more I concur with this view. However, concern is raised in respect of the scale and siting of the front dormer windows.
5. Although the dormers would be set within the main roofslope and have pitched roofs, they are large and do not relate well to the windows in the ground floor below in terms of their positioning and extent of glazing. Consequently, the resultant front elevation would appear disjointed and represent a missed opportunity to create a more balanced and attractive facade to the property.

6. At the rear, the large, unbroken dormer window would dominate the roof of the property. It would be clearly visible from the habitable rooms and private amenity spaces of surrounding dwellings, having a jarring effect by virtue of its scale and extent across the roof of the building and projection to the rear. Its sheer presence would be exacerbated by the disorderly mixture of vertical and horizontal emphases provided by the rear-facing windows and rendered panels.
7. With regard to the ground floor rear addition, I note the guidance concerning side extensions in the Swale Borough Council Supplementary Planning Document 'Designing an Extension – A Guide for Householders' (SPD). This states that, as a general rule, rear extensions should not project from the rear wall of the main house by more than 3 metres.
8. The proposed single storey element would project more than 13 metres beyond the rear elevation of the existing bungalow. Although there appears to be some flexibility within the terms of the SPD, the proposed projection from the rear elevation would be significantly greater than that advocated in the SPD. The excessive size of the element would be in contrast to the existing dwelling, and compete with its overall scale. It would represent a bulky addition to the detriment of the character of the building.
9. Taken in the round, the extent of the proposals at the back of the property would lack architectural subtlety. There would be flat roofs to the ground floor and dormer, an asymmetrical roof to the projecting rear addition, a steep pitched roof over the garage, and an overuse of different materials and finishing including bricks, cedar cladding, rendered white panels, grey cladding, slate tiles and solar panels. Collectively the scheme would appear cluttered and represent an inelegant design.
10. I am cognisant that the host dwelling and wider area are not subject to heritage constraints and the scheme would provide enlarged accommodation for the appellant and his family. However, these issues do not overcome the harm I have identified above. My attention is also drawn to pre-application advice from the Council, however this appears to relate to a significantly different design and is therefore of limited weight in my reasoning.
11. I conclude that the scheme would result in harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area. It would be contrary Policies CP4, DM14 and DM16 of Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan July 2017 (LP) and the provisions of the SPD, which seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance.

Living conditions

12. There is a mature evergreen hedge of substantial height on the boundary with 2a Crosier Court. Despite the scale of the rear extension in close proximity to the boundary, I am satisfied that the screening provided by the hedge would ensure that the outlook from 2a would not be adversely affected.
13. The Council is concerned that the hedge may not remain, however this matter could be addressed through the imposition of conditions requiring details during construction to ensure the protection of the hedge, and a post-development condition for replacement plants should any die or become diseased.
14. I conclude on this matter that the development would not cause detriment to the living conditions of the occupants of 2a Crosier Court in respect of outlook.

It would accord with Policy DM14 of the LP, which states that proposals should cause no significant harm to amenity.

Conclusion

15. Accounting for my reasoning and all issues raised, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR