



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/22/3291960

2 The Myrtles, Summerville Avenue, Minster-on-Sea, Sheppey ME12 3JY

- 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 David Mosdell against the decision of Swale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/502476/FULL, dated 27 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 November 2021.
 - The proposed development is for demolition of garage to the side/ rear of property. Construction of 2 storey extension to side elevation with ground floor continuing to the rear back wall of existing main house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in the determination of this appeal are the effect of the development having regard to a) the character of the surrounding area; and b) parking provision.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site relates to a two-storey, semi-detached property on Summerville Avenue 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. 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, houses should not be physically or visually linked, especially at first floor level as the space between buildings is important in preserving character and sense of openness. A gap of 2m between a first floor extension and the side boundary is normally required.
5. The proposed two-storey side element would be positioned approximately 0.9m from the side boundary with 54 Summerville Avenue. Although there appears to be some flexibility within the terms of the SPG, the proposed distance from the border would be significantly less than that normally stipulated.

6. As a result the scheme would substantially reduce the gap between the appeal dwelling and no.54, particularly at first floor level. This would decrease the visual permeability between built form and introduce a terracing effect that would be deleterious to the sense of spaciousness that currently exists between the properties.
7. I acknowledge that the site and wider area are not designated heritage assets, that external materials and joinery details would match the existing dwelling, and the overall design would be subordinate to the main house. However, these matters do not overcome the harm I have identified above. I am also cognisant of the side element to 1 The Myrtles; nevertheless this is set much further forward than the appeal proposal and to my mind would not therefore create a sense of symmetry to the semi-detached pairing. In any event, additions to other houses would be neutral considerations in any balance against planning harm, and each case must be assessed on its own merits.
8. I therefore conclude that the scheme would result in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would contravene 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.

Parking provision

9. The appeal proposal would result in the loss of a garage and off-street parking space. I observed that the area is a residential environment with on-street parking evident. Nevertheless, during my visit at Tuesday lunchtime, many on-street spaces were available close to the appeal site on Summerville Avenue. Whilst I accept this is only a snap shot in time, it is an indication that on-street parking is not difficult to achieve at certain times of day. I also note that there are no restrictions by way of permits, time limits or a pay and display regime.
10. Based upon the evidence before me and my observations, I do not consider that the area suffers from undue parking stress and the scheme would be acceptable in this respect. There is sufficient on-street parking capacity to accommodate the demand arising from the development, without significantly worsening the existing parking situation close to the site and in surrounding streets. I also note that the site is in an accessible area in close proximity to public services and transport modes.
11. I therefore conclude that there would be no undue detriment with regard to parking provision. The scheme would meet policies DM7 and DM14 of the LP and the Swale Borough Parking Standards SPD May 2020 in respect of traffic generation and environmental protection.

Conclusion

12. Having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR