



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2022

by E Dade BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V1505/W/22/3298610

135 Norsey View Drive, Billericay CM12 0QX

- 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 Miss Chantelle Rowland against the decision of Basildon Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01732/FULL, dated 18 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is a garage conversion and two storey front extension with a pitched roof and gable end windows. Proposed alteration of front and rear facing dormers with pitched roofs and gable end windows. Proposed first floor rear extension with a pitched roof and gable end windows. Proposed skylight and bifold doors in existing single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant's statement includes the submission of revised plans which provide a factual correction to show more accurately the position of surrounding dwellings. I have based my decision on those revised plans.
3. In addition, the appellant's statement puts forward a more detailed description of the proposed development. In the interests of consistency, I have used the development description supplied on the application form which I consider adequately describes the main features of the proposal. Detailed aspects of the proposal are explained throughout the planning application and appeal documents.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a modest semi-detached chalet-style dwelling situated within a suburban estate, consisting predominantly of detached and semi-detached chalet-style dwellings with occasional single storey and two storey dwellings.
6. With the exception of some minor differences in architectural features, there is a high degree of symmetry between the form and appearance of the appeal property and adjoining dwelling No 135A. Notably each dwelling has a

prominent, cream-coloured box dormer with matching windows that occupy a large area of the front roof plane, and a flat-roofed garage adjoining the front elevation and parallel with the flank wall. The dwellings are set within an open, hard landscaped driveway which contributes to the uniform appearance of the dwellings.

7. The proposed large two-storey front projection, along with the proposed front bonnet dormer which would occupy a large section of the remaining front roof plane, would appear dominant in the context of the existing modest building. The proposal would significantly disrupt the symmetry which presently exists between the appeal property and the adjoining dwelling. The proposal would not therefore increase the attractiveness of the dwelling but would adversely affect the dwelling's character and appearance.
8. The appellant's statement identifies specific examples of dwellings and pairs of semi-detached houses with asymmetrical design and differing forms of front projection. Whilst each of the examples is located at Norsey View Drive, this is a relatively long residential street with variations in character along the route. Those dwellings are distant from the appeal site and as such are not formative of the character of the area in proximity of the appeal site. The generally symmetrical appearance of pairs of dwellings is a common characteristic within the street scene surrounding the appeal site and contributes to the character and appearance of the area.
9. Whilst the area surrounding the appeal site includes a mix of dwelling types with a variety of architectural features, the numerous chalet-style dwellings with pitched roofs at single storey level and front dormers dominate the street scene and have a defining effect upon the character and appearance of the area. The proposed two storey front projection with a front gable would form an incongruous addition to the street scene which would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.
10. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy BAS BE12 of the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies (2007) which indicates that planning permission for the alteration and extension of existing dwellings should be refused where the development would cause harm to the character of the surrounding area and street scene.
11. In addition, the proposal would conflict with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the Framework) which requires developments to be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

12. The appellant's statement indicates that the quality of the dwelling and the health and wellbeing of its occupants would be improved through the modern standards which would be employed during construction of the proposed development. However, such improvements are generally private benefits restricted to the occupiers of the appeal property, such as increasing the dwelling's floor space and addressing the building's issues with damp and rain penetration. Improvements to the building's energy efficiency would have a small public benefit through conserving resources and minimising pollution but would not outweigh the harm I have identified in respect of the proposal's effects on the character and appearance of the appeal property and area.

13. In addition, the appellant's statement suggests that the effects of a past shortfall in the area's housing supply and increasing house prices has made extending the existing appeal property to make a more efficient use of it a more practical option for the occupants than moving house. Whilst the proposal may be more economically attractive to the occupants, I consider this to be a private matter which does not outweigh the harm I identified above.
14. The appellant's statement suggests the development plan is out of date. The Council has assessed the level of consistency of its saved policies with the Framework. Notably, the Council has concluded that Policy BAS BE12, which I have cited above, is compliant with the Framework, meaning weight can be afforded to this policy despite the plan's age. Furthermore, the policy is also not out of date as the proposal is not for the provision of housing and so footnote 8 to paragraph 11 d) of the Framework is not triggered. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply. In addition, as set out above, I have considered the proposal against the requirements of the Framework and found conflict.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, having assessed the case against the development plan as a whole and having had regard to all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Dade

INSPECTOR