The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 December 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/D/22/3309925
5 Beacon Hill, Maldon, CM9 6HR

- 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 Mrs Bing against the decision of Maldon District Council.
- The application Ref HOUSE/MAL/22/00627, dated 13 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2022.
- The development proposed is the erection of a front extension adding a utility room, extending cloak room into bathroom and adding a new porch.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a front extension adding a utility room, extending cloak room into bathroom and adding a new porch at 5 Beacon Hill, Maldon, CM9 6HR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref HOUSE/MAL/22/00627, dated 13 May 2022, subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

   2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drg Nos PL-01, PL-02, PL-03, PL-04, PL-05D Rev D and PL-06D Rev D.

   3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mrs Bing against Maldon District Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached, two-storey dwelling with a traditionally pitched gabled roof. It is sited on high ground above the levels of the highway and recessed behind a deep and steeply sloping front garden. Beacon Hill is a residential road comprising detached and semi-detached properties of broadly

similar age dating from the 1960s and with a mix of repeat property styles. Despite alterations to the original forms of some dwellings, there is an openly perceived degree of repetition to the architecture, especially those most prominent on the higher ground to the east side of Beacon Hill, that imparts a pleasing sense of regimentation and harmony to the street scene.

5. The proposal would add a single-storey, lean-to extension to the front across approximately two-thirds the width of the property. The extension would project 2.75m forward of the existing building with the roof pitching up to just below the sill level of a first-floor window, which would be marginally raised in height to accommodate the addition.

6. The front extension would unquestionably alter the appearance of the existing dwelling and, due to its elevated position, would be apparent when viewed from the public domain along Beacon Hill. However, it would be designed to complement the appearance and form of the existing. Due to its deeply recessed position, it would not intrude the vista along Beacon Hill, and would only be seen head-on where it would be set against the backdrop of the existing building, which would remain dominant and would retain an overall scale, bulk and form that would be consistent with the other similar properties to this side of the road.

7. Together with the use of brickwork and tiles to match the existing, in my assessment the extension would appear as a largely unobtrusive addition that would have little effect of significance upon the wider established character of the street scene, which would be unharmed. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policies S1, D1 or H4 of the Maldon District Approved Local Development Plan 2014 – 2029 (2017) as far as they seek to achieve high quality design that respects the local character and context of the area. For the same reasons there would be no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.

Conditions

8. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. I have specifically excluded reference to Drg No PL-07 in my condition despite it being a plan referenced on the Council's decision notice. It was prepared to illustrate the fenestration patterns in the area but shows an alternative extension to No 5, which is not consistent with the proposal that is before me.

9. In the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the area a condition is required to ensure that the proposed extension is finished with materials to match the existing building.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given, I find that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the area. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR