



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2023

By Terrence Kemmann-Lane JP DipTP FRTPI MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/23/3314976

16 Keith Way, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6SQ

- 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 Kol Babani against the decision of Southend-on-Sea City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01896/FULH, dated 14 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is hip to gable roof extension with dormer to rear to form habitable accommodation in the loft space and erect two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. The description on the application form described the proposed development as "2 storey side extension and hip to gable dormer loft conversion". The council amended this to the description given in the heading above. This description was used by the appellant on the appeal form. I have adopted it as better describing the nature of the development proposed.
3. There is a Certificate of Lawfulness granted on 27th October 2022 for 'Hip to gable roof extension with dormer to rear to form habitable accommodation in the loft space' in respect of the host dwelling. Consequently, these elements are not controversial.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed two-storey side extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the streetscene and the wider area.

Reasons

5. The application site is a detached dwelling within a well-established residential area. The surrounding development consists of a mix bungalows and 2-storey houses, the majority of which are semi-detached. In view of the matters mentioned in paragraph 2 above, it is the effect of the proposed side extension that is material in this case.
6. Local and national planning policies and guidance seek to ensure that new development is well designed. Paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy

Framework (the Framework) states that “*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*”. With specific reference to residential side extensions, the Council’s Design and Townscape Guide states that: “*Side extensions can easily become overbearing and dominate the original property. In order to avoid this, side extensions should be designed to appear subservient to the parent building...*”.

7. The important point about side extensions to houses, from the point of view of their relationship with the design of the host dwelling and the streetscene, is that they should be subordinate to the original dwelling, so that they relate well and do not become an over-dominant feature. The appellant explains that the proposed side extension would be set back 0.4m from the front elevation which would achieve a 1m set back behind the projecting front box bay windows. The modest 2m width of the proposed extension in combination with the setback from the front elevation and set down from the main ridge, the appellant contends, means that the proposed development would respect the scale of, and appear as a subservient addition to, the host dwelling.
8. I cannot agree with that assessment. The host dwelling is well proportioned as a 2-storey 3-bedroom property. The proposed side extension is relatively narrow, giving it a very vertical emphasis. The 0.4m set back from the main front elevation, and a similar drop-down from the existing ridge, is insufficient to provide the sense of it being secondary to the host dwelling – that is, subservient – so that its appearance would be out of character with the host dwelling, and would be harmful to its appearance and hence to the streetscene.
9. In addition, the proposed two-storey extension would also significantly reduce the space between the host dwelling and neighbouring property at No.18. This gap between dwellings is characteristic within the streetscene, and is more prominent between two-storey houses where they have neighbouring bungalows. The generally consistent visual break between buildings and the moderately spaciousness of this suburban area is an important element in its established character. The proposal would be visually dominating over the neighbouring bungalow at no. 18 and would be at odds with the character of the area. Furthermore, the proposed first floor window on the front elevation is offset towards the main structure of the house and thus has a cramped appearance, and is not in keeping with the existing fenestration.
10. For these reasons I consider that the proposed two-storey side extension would fail to respect the scale of the host dwelling and would not appear as a subservient addition to it. It would thus be harmful to the appearance of the existing house and this would reflect poorly on the character of the area. Further, the reduction of the visual break between the appeal property and its neighbour at No.18 would detract from the sense of moderate spaciousness in this suburban residential area. For these reasons I will dismiss the appeal.

Terrence Kemmann-Lane

INSPECTOR