



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: 3rd May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V1505/D/23/3315404
55 Glebe Road, Wickford, SS11 8ET

- 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 Mark Butterworth against the decision of Basildon Borough Council.
- The application Ref 22/01560/FULL, dated 31 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 December 2022.
- The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and summerhouse; proposed two storey side and rear extensions with rear Juliet balcony; single storey front, side and rear extension incorporating canopy to front.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing garage and summerhouse; proposed two storey side and rear extensions with rear Juliet balcony; single storey front, side and rear extension incorporating canopy to front at 55 Glebe Road, Wickford, SS11 8ET in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/01560/FULL, dated 31 October 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 approved plans: drawing Nos. 22-052-002 Block Plan; 22-052-010 Existing plans; 22-052-020 Existing elevations; 22-052-100 Proposed Plans; and 22-052-120 Proposed elevations.
 - 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.

Preliminary matters

2. The description of the development on the application form described the proposal as "demolition of existing single storey garage and rear summer house, new side and rear extensions to form 2 new bedrooms at 1st floor and a new kitchen dining area at ground floor with new entrance hall and bathroom". This was changed by the planning officer to that given in the heading above, which I consider describes the proposal more accurately in terms of the operational development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed extensions on the existing dwelling, its character and appearance and that of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The application site is occupied by a two-storey semi-detached dwelling on Glebe Road, within an established residential area of two storey houses and bungalows. The appeal dwelling, No.55, is at the end of a run of semi-detached houses that extends to No.29, although Nos.29 to 35 are set well back from the road, unlike the rest of this group. It would appear that this group were originally all of the same form; semi-detached 2-storey house with hipped roofs and single storey side elements set back behind the main frontage.
5. Almost all of them have been altered over time, many with the single-storey side element now extended to 2-stories. This includes the immediate neighbours of the appeal property, at Nos.51 and 53, which both have 2-storey side elements. In the case on No.53, there is a single-storey porch under a mono-pitch roof, attached to a 2-storey element under a hipped roof. The result for this group is that the symmetry that once existed with each pair of houses has been lost, including by changes in fenestration and exterior finishes.
6. The appeal property itself is at the junction of Glebe Road with Rectory Grove, and is therefore visible from both directions along Rectory Road. It has a garage almost on its boundary with Rectory Grove, with a low-pitched roof, that runs the length of the side elevation. Behind the garage, set a little off the curtilage boundary, is a shed/garden room, also under a low-pitched roof. Another feature of the appeal dwelling that is of significance is the large flat-roofed dormer that wraps around the rear and side roof planes, sitting awkwardly on the main hipped-roof and the hip of the ground floor side element. This dormer is very visible from the junction of Glebe Road with Rectory Grove, and along Rectory Grove in both directions.
7. The policy background to this appeal consists of the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies adopted in September 2007. The relevant policy in this case is BAS BE12 (Development Control) which states, as relevant in this case, *"Planning permission for new residential development, and for the alteration and extension of existing dwellings, will be refused if it causes material harm in any of the following ways:- (i) harm to the character of the surrounding area, including the street scene;"*. This is in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policies Framework (the Framework) that place importance on the need for high quality design in new development, and that poor design should be refused.
8. Paragraph 130 of the Framework aims to ensure good design that is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, whilst paragraph 134 is clear that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.

9. There was a previous scheme that was refused, and the appeal against the refusal dismissed. I have been supplied with a copy of that appeal decision, but I have not been provided with the drawings that illustrated that scheme. However, the description given of the previous proposal indicates that the same elements are proposed in both schemes. In any event, it is the scheme before me that I must evaluate against the policies already mentioned, and in the light of the council's refusal reason.
10. It is clear that the proposal before me has attempted to respond to previous criticism. From the officer's report, I note that the ground floor side extension has been reduced in width by 0.4m, and at first-floor level by 1.5m. Other changes include a reduction in the amount of flat roof at first floor level but an increase of flat roof at ground floor level. The flat roof on the ground floor side extension would be on top of a surrounding mono-pitch roof so that, to most observers, the flat roof element would not be apparent. The flat roof at first floor level would be between the neighbouring house and a gable-roofed rear projection which would be set well in from Rectory Grove.
11. My descriptions in paragraphs 4 and 5 above endeavour to provide a picture of the context against which the appeal proposal should be judged. Effectively there is no symmetry left that must at one time have existed among this row of 14 semi-detached houses. In respect of the appeal house and its neighbour, there is a marked difference in appearance. The latter has a 2-storey side extension, fronted by a mono-pitch roofed porch.
12. This mono pitched roof would be reflected in the roof of the proposed ground floor extension to the appeal property that would wrap around the 2 frontages. The first-floor element, whilst wider than would generally be found acceptable, would be set back from the main front elevation almost to the same extent as on the other houses, and in design terms would be more successful than one a few doors away which also runs close to the curtilage boundary. I consider the appeal proposal to be more carefully thought out and designed than many of the extensions and dormer windows in the immediate area on both roads, and includes what I consider to be a major improvement of the appeal property by eliminating the large and discordant flat roofed dormer that I have described in paragraph 5 above.
13. The appeal scheme is not without imperfections, and the drawings are not entirely consistent in detail: for instance, the dormers are not shown on the 'Proposed East Elevation' and nor is the window to the ground floor toilet. Nevertheless, I regard the scheme as one which delivers a higher quality of family accommodation, in a manner that integrates well with the host dwelling and provides a satisfactory turning of the corner around the junction of the 2 roads. I do not consider that it would be overly dominant and overbearing, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. For these reasons I will allow the appeal.

Conditions

14. The statutory condition that provides a time limit on the start of development must be imposed. In addition, the council has suggested 2 conditions in the event that the appeal is upheld. I consider that these conditions should be imposed for the following reasons: condition 2 is required for certainty and avoidance of doubt as to the development permitted; and condition 3 is to

ensure that the appearance of the development permitted integrates with the existing in a visually satisfactory manner.

Terrence Kemmann-Lane

INSPECTOR