



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 May 2023

By Terrence Kemmann-Lane JP DipTP FRTPI MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/23/3316738

34 Langport Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea, SS0 0EB

- 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 Gary Fenton against the decision of Southend-on-Sea City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/02219/FULH, dated 15 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 9 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is erect two storey side extension, form hipped to half hipped roof extension with dormers to front and rear to form habitable accommodation in the loft space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property, the streetscene and the area more widely.

Reasons

3. Langport Drive ends in a cul-de-sac, within which the appeal site is situated, at the junction with Somerton Avenue. The site is occupied by a hipped roof detached bungalow. The surrounding area is residential, consisting mainly of semi-detached and detached bungalows with traditional hipped roofs. A few of the bungalows have had roof conversions with some examples of small flat-roofed dormers in the wider area and there are some examples of single storey extensions to the side.
4. Beginning with the development plan, Policy DM3.4 of the Development Management Document, 2015, specifically relates to the conversion of bungalows in the City and states that:
"The conversion or redevelopment of single storey dwellings (bungalows) will generally be resisted. Exceptions will be considered where the proposal:
(i) Does not create an unacceptable juxtaposition within the streetscene that would harm the character and appearance of the area; or
(ii)..." Not relevant here.
The text of the council's Design and Townscape Guide of 2009, referred to in the officer's report, is also relevant to my decision, particularly paragraphs 360 and 366 quoted.

5. As described in paragraph 3 above, the dwellings in this area, both in Langport Drive and in Somerton Avenue are almost all bungalows. The exceptions to this are a gambrel roof house in Langport Drive, and 2 hip-roofed houses in Somerton Avenue. There are also the flat-roofed dormers that I have mentioned, which of course retain the shape and general form of the roof, although in some cases not without harm to the appearance of the bungalow.
6. I therefore conclude that there is a very strong continuity, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, in which the hipped-roofs of the bungalows play an important part. This continuity provides an attractive appearance that the individual design of the bungalows would not achieve separately. To achieve the desired accommodation, the proposal would lengthen the ridge of the existing taller roof element, from 1.05m to 9.5m. This much enlarged roof would have half hips at each end – in other words gables with small hips to the ridge. Into the front plane of this roof would be inserted a small roof light and 2 gable-roofed dormers. The dormers align with the windows proposed on the ground floor, but add bulk to the roof. Their proportions are not satisfactory, with the glazed elements being rather square, losing the vertical emphasis that is achieved on the majority of the fenestration proposed.
7. The plans also show that the hip on the front end of the projecting wing of the bungalow is proposed to become a gable. I am inclined to consider that this is a minor alteration that would not materially affect the continuity of the building form. However, the principal changes to the roof, when seen from the public realm, would amount to a significant change to the appearance of the building which would be a dominant and incongruous element in the streetscene. My overall conclusion is that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property, the streetscene and the area more widely. It would thus be contrary to policy DM3.4 and the guidance given in the Design and Townscape Guide.
8. I have noted the references to the permitted development rights that may be exercised by the appellant, which admittedly would not be likely to produce a satisfactory design. Nevertheless, I conclude that the proposal before me has the shortcomings that I have identified, and they justify the refusal of planning permission. Therefore, I will dismiss the appeal.

Terrence Kemmann-Lane

INSPECTOR