



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2024

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/23/3330799

50 Bellhouse Road, Eastwood, ESSEX, SS9 5NL

- 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 Drew Rawlinson against the decision of Southend-on-Sea City Council.
 - The application Ref. 23/01100/FULH, dated 29 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 29 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is a first floor rear extension with gabled roof and 3 velux windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Since the appeal was lodged a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been published. However, as the policies of most relevance to this proposal have not changed fundamentally it has not been necessary to seek further comments from the parties.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the streetscene.

Reasons

4. Bellhouse Road forms part of a residential area that is varied in character, with a wide mix of dwelling styles and sizes. The appeal property contributes to this variety, and is a semi-detached chalet-style dwelling with single-storey eaves height and a front dormer window. The walls of a single-storey rear extension have been constructed, and would partly form the base for the proposal. The local topography means that the appeal dwelling is elevated above the road and a two-storey house to the north, and is highly visible in Bellhouse Road, but also in views across lower level gardens from Leighfields Road.
5. The existing extension under construction is apparent from outside of the site, but the proposed first-floor above would be even more visible and prominent as a result of its depth, height, form and siting; viewed on the ground, I do not share the appellant's assessment that it would only be visible via very acute

angles of view, and would have limited presence within the public realm. The high eaves line of the proposal would be out of keeping with the existing single-storey chalet form of the dwelling, and would create an overly dominant and disproportionate addition. The bulk would be exacerbated by the necessarily shallow roof pitch, at odds with the steeper and more traditional pitch of the existing roof. The extension would be set in from the northern side wall, but due to the elevated position of the dwelling, this modest inset would do little to minimise the visual impact on the building and in the streetscene.

6. In terms of detailing, the siting of the proposed first-floor side window, tucked into a corner of the elevation close to the eaves and existing roof slope, would not be well aligned with the existing window pattern. However, I find no objection to the use of doors to the first-floor rear elevation, as there are other similar examples in the vicinity. The use of matching materials is noted, but would not warrant acceptance of the proposal.
7. I am mindful that there are various building and extension designs in the vicinity, but none which would obviously support the proposed architectural approach for this chalet-style dwelling. In this context, the proposal would not accord with Policy DM1 of the Council's Development Management Document 2015 (DMD), which requires development to add to the overall quality of the area and to respect the character of the site, its local context and surroundings in terms including architectural approach, height, size, scale, form, massing, proportions and detailed design features; nor with DMD Policy DM3, which expects building additions to make a positive contribution to the character of the original building and the surrounding area, and to adopt a scale that is respectful and subservient.
8. I therefore conclude that as a result of its size, scale, design and siting, the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property and the streetscene. This would be contrary to the overarching design aims set out in the Council's Core Strategy 2007 Policies KP2 and CP4, DMD Policies DM1 and DM3, and advice in the Council's Design and Townscape Guide 2009, which requires rear extensions to integrate with the character of the parent building, in terms including scale, the relationship with existing fenestration and roof form. It would also be in conflict with the Framework, as supported by the National Design Guide, which seeks to create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings that add to the overall quality of the area.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR