



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 July 2024

by P B Jarvis BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20TH August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/D/24/3341491

9 Sunningdale Road Chelmsford Essex CM1 2NH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Conran Smith against the decision of Chelmsford City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00164/FUL.
 - The proposed development is demolition of existing garage; construction of two storey side extension; new side access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing garage; construction of two storey side extension and new side access, at 9 Sunningdale Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2NH, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00164/FUL, 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 relates to the following approved plans: drawing 01 (existing plans & elevations), drawing 02 (proposed plans and elevations), drawing 03 (location plan) and drawing 04 (block plans).
 - 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 dwelling.
 - 4) The first-floor bathroom window in the southern (side) elevation facing No. 7 Sunningdale Road shall be obscure glazed (minimum Level 3 obscurity level) and non-opening below 1.7m above finished floor level and permanently retained as such.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies on the east side of Sunningdale Road within an established residential area. The eastern side of the street is predominantly characterised by semi-detached pairs of dwellings though there are several detached dwellings on the western side of the road opposite and in the vicinity of the appeal site. The dwellings have a mixture of brick and render elevations and

hipped roofs, some with front gable features. The dwelling on the appeal site has a main hipped roof over a front projecting element with catslide roof to the side sloping down from a ridge line that is set back from the main front element. To the side is an attached single storey flat roofed garage with front parapet roof edge which extends right up to the boundary and which is attached to a similar flat roofed garage on the neighbouring property.

4. The proposal would introduce a two-storey addition on the southern side of the dwelling extending towards the boundary creating a new hipped roof form at right angles to the existing catslide under a new forward projecting element. This would significantly increase the bulk of the dwelling as viewed in the street scene and visually 'fill the gap' at first floor level towards the side boundary. However, given that a number of nearby properties have been the subject of various side extensions, adding bulk to the first-floor level, and that a reasonable gap to the side boundary would be retained, the additional bulk created would not be unduly dominant or result in a dwelling that would be out of scale with its surroundings.
5. The Council contends that the extended dwelling would result in a 'visually incoherent and disordered design' that would not be compatible with the host dwelling. I agree that the forward projecting two storey element would be noticeably narrower than the existing forward projecting element, but that would ensure a degree of subservience notwithstanding that it would be level with it. In other respects, it would reflect its appearance with hipped roof. The lower part of the catslide roof would be lost through the introduction of a flat roofed 'infill' between the two front projecting elements. Whilst resulting in the loss of this distinctive feature, it would nevertheless be visually read as an integral part of the design of the extended dwelling and given its relatively small extent, matching eaves height and set back position between the two front projections it would not be unduly incongruous.
6. Overall, whilst I agree that the extended dwelling would be significantly changed in terms of its appearance and form, it would be compatible with the wider street scene, which as noted above, is characterised by dwellings that have been subject to various extensions. Indeed, at the time of my site visit I saw that number 16, on the opposite side of Sunningdale Road within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, has been successfully extended to the front with a similar, albeit wider, front projection. It does differ in that it has retained part of the distinctive catslide roof form between the two forward projecting elements but for the reasons set out above, the proposed flat-roofed infill would be acceptable.
7. In the above circumstances, I find that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider street scene. The development would comply with policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan (2020) which seeks to ensure that development respects the character and appearance of the area in which it is located, is compatible with its surroundings and the host dwelling having regard to scale, form and architecture amongst other things and that extensions are well-proportioned and visually coherent.
8. It would also accord with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to achieve good design that is visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

9. With regard to conditions, I agree with those suggested by the Council to require accordance with the approved plans and matching materials in the interests of clarity and visual amenity. I also agree that the south facing bathroom window should be obscurely glazed and non-opening so as to protect the privacy of the occupiers of the adjoining property.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted.

P B Jarvis

INSPECTOR