



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 August 2024

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/D/24/3346755

9 Lordship Close, Hutton, Essex, CM13 2QY.

- 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 Mrs Victoria Wass against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00234/HHA.
 - The development proposed is described as *2 x storey side extension/wraparound rear extension; Front porch/garage extension; Loft Conversion with Rear Dress-Dormers.*
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposal on the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, 9 Lordship Close (No 9), is a detached two-storey dwelling located in a small close of some 10 dwellings. As I saw just under half of the houses have been extended and altered to create larger dwellings, which when viewed from the street now virtually fill their plots side to side. Due to the rich variety of design solutions adopted for the extensions the uniformity of design of the original development has been significantly denuded.
4. The appellant proposes the demolition of the existing conservatory, the construction of part first floor, part two-storey side and two-storey rear extension, to include Juliette balconies, two dormers and front facing roof lights. In addition, it is proposed to convert part of the garage to habitable accommodation, add a front porch, garage extension, alter the fenestration and apply a render finish to the whole dwelling as extended
5. The proposed two-storey rear extension involves the removal of the rear roof slope and building a new matching roof slope at the rear of the dwelling as extended. While maintaining the existing ridge height a section of flat roof would be built between the front and rear roof slopes. The roof would thereby change from a simple pitched roof, typical of the roofs of neighbouring dwellings, to a crown roof.

6. The proposed crown roof would, in this context appear as a bulky, awkward and alien roof form. Further, as illustrated on the design drawings the flat roof would meet the front and rear sloping roofs at the same level. Accordingly, the detailing of the junction between the flat and pitched roofs would be awkward to form utilising traditional ridge tiles that would be required to make the sloping roofs appear visually correct. Further as the flat roof would need to be set to a fall it would have to rise at some point above the level of the ridges, thereby making it more prominent than suggested on the design drawings.
7. In addition, due to the location of No 9 in the close the rear and side elevations of the house as extend would be visible from the public domain, and although more limited also from Hall Green Lane. Accordingly, I conclude in respect of the main issue that the proposed two-storey addition as designed would cause significant harm to the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the wider area.
8. To allow the development as designed would therefore be contrary to the objectives of Policy BE14 of the Brentwood Borough Council Brentwood Local Plan 2016-2033 (Adopted March 2022), the National Design Guide, and the National Planning Policy Framework which all seek, amongst other things to promote high quality design compatible with its location.

Other Matters

9. In reaching my determination I have had due regard to the fact that other than the proposed crown roof the Council found the proposal acceptable. Further, it decided it would have no harmful impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, adequate level of onsite parking would be maintained, and the palette of materials proposed would be acceptable. However, the absence of harm is a neutral factor in my considerations and, as such, I have given these matters very limited weight in my decision.
10. I note the appellant's desire address a need for more living space. However, given the harm that I have identified I give this consideration limited weight in the planning balance.
11. As acknowledged above I am aware of the alterations that have been carried out to a number of the other dwellings in the close, including No 4 referred to by the appellant, and thereby their impact on the visual amenity of the area. However, while having regard to the particular local context I have considered this proposal on its individual design merits. Accordingly in this case, I attach little weight to the established form and scale of such other development in the close.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR