



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2024

by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/24/3345134

9 Hayes Barton, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 3TS

- 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 Mark Clifford against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00078/FULH.
 - The development proposed is to erect first floor front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property, the street scene and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached dwelling set within a residential area of properties largely dating from the same period. Although I note the appellant's view that Hayes Barton has an eclectic mix of designs, there is some cohesion as a result of similar house types, materials and design features. Extensions have introduced some variety, but this has not undermined the character of the original housing development.
4. As noted by a Planning Inspector¹ considering a scheme at 22 Hayes Barton in 2020, having a single two-storey front projection, either hipped or gabled, is a fairly common feature of houses in the street. Others, such as the appeal property and the dwelling directly opposite, combine a strong front two-storey gable with a deeper single-storey projection. Properties with 2no. two-storey front wings are less commonplace in Hayes Barton; it was not evident at the appeal site visit that such examples are numerous, as suggested by the appellant.
5. The siting of most dwellings in the street scene is reasonably consistent, with few projecting much beyond neighbouring houses at first-floor level. However, the single-storey element at the appeal property projects forward of 10 Hayes Barton by some distance, and this would be more noticeable in the street scene

¹ Appeal ref. APP/D1590/D/20/3250457, for a front extension and changes to façade at 22 Hayes Barton.

as a result of the proposed increased in height of this wing. In contrast, the few examples of dual 2-storey front wings are either more aligned with neighbouring properties, and therefore less visually intrusive, or set further back from the road.

6. Policy DM3 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document 2015 (DMD) requires all building extensions to make a positive contribution to the character of the original building and the surrounding area, adopting a scale that is respectful and subservient, and with detailing that ensures successful integration with it. This is supported by the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 1 Design and Townscape Guide 2009 (DTG), which notes that front extensions are generally discouraged as they alter the relationship of property within the street; and that where they are considered not to harm the local townscape, care must be taken to ensure that they are of an appropriate size and scale, and that they show consideration for the established street frontage.
7. Whilst I appreciate that the eaves and ridge height of the proposed extension would be lower than the main house, the proposed first-floor extension would nevertheless appear as a dominant feature on the front of the property due to its width (albeit determined by the ground floor projection on which it would be built), bulk and forward siting. It would compete with the original front wing, and with its contrasting front roof hip, would appear as an incongruous addition to the dwelling. I am not convinced that the proposal would appear subservient, nor that the hipped roof would materially reduce its actual and perceived massing.
8. I am mindful that the proposal seeks to follow the design of the extension at neighbouring 8 Hayes Barton. However, the front wing of that property appears quite prominent in the street scene as a result of its width, mass and siting, and contrasts with the prevailing dwelling style in the street scene. From the Council's report it seems that the extension at No.8 pre-dates by some margin the adoption of the Council's current policies and guidance, and as it is not characteristic of the street scene it does not justify acceptance of the appeal proposal.
9. The appellant has drawn attention to other properties with dual wings in the vicinity. Examples in The Campions, at the end of the cul-de-sac, are not directly comparable to the proposal, as the 'second' gable appears almost as an addition set back within the roof slope. The width of the second wing at 14 Hayes Barton appears narrower than proposed in this appeal, with less projection beyond the neighbouring house, and less visual impact in the street scene. The individual design of the first-floor extension at No.11 is not directly comparable to the proposal in terms of design or siting.
10. I note the appellant's view that these double two-storey front projections are of sufficient concentration in this part of Hayes Barton to constitute established, characteristic elements of the street scene that contribute to the positive, eclectic character of the built form, irrespective of their planning circumstances. However, I do not share this assessment, and consider these examples to be the exception in the street scene, and not typical of the prevailing forms. In the absence of any details of planning permissions granted, I do not know if they were assessed against current planning policies and guidance, nor know the reasoning behind the decisions made. As such, these examples do not warrant acceptance of the proposal.

11. The parties have drawn attention to the extension dismissed at 22 Hayes Barton (see footnote). I agree with the appellant's view that the two schemes are not comparable in terms of scale, design, nor positioning. However, I nevertheless find that decision to be of relevance, insofar as it highlights the prevalence of single two-storey front projections on dwellings in Hayes Barton, and the effect that siting in relation to neighbouring properties may have in assessing a proposal.
12. I appreciate the purpose of the extension and the improvement it would offer to the appellant's quality of life. However, this benefit would not outweigh the visual harm arising from securing the additional accommodation in the form proposed.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property, the street scene and the wider area. It would conflict with Southend Core Strategy 2007 Policy CP4, which seeks to secure a high quality urban environment; and with DMD Policies DM3 and DM1, which amongst other criteria 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 matters including architectural approach, height, size, scale, form, massing, proportions, and detailed design features; and with guidance in the DTG.
14. For the same reasons, the proposal would be at odds with the requirements in the National Planning Policy Framework, as supported by the National Design Guide, to ensure that developments are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

15. A representation was submitted to the application which included concern about the effect of the proposal on afternoon sunlight. However, I share the Council's assessment, that the increase in height would not result in any significant harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR