



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2024 by E Street BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/D/24/3354053

Cherrymere, Keycol Hill, Bobbing, Kent ME9 7LG

- 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 Simon Cheeseman against the decision of Swale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/502425/FULL.
 - The development proposed is described as "bungalow loft conversion to include insertion of dormers and rear gabled roof. Demolition of existing garage and construction of new garage".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published between the determination of the planning application and this appeal. The substantive parts of the new 2024 version do not however differ from the previous insofar as they relate to the main issue. The cases of the main parties will not therefore be prejudiced by my reference to the new version. I have proceeded on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal building is a simple, mostly original, and modest hipped roof bungalow to the rear of frontage development, itself comprising mostly two storey dwellings that have largely uncluttered roofscapes. There are outbuildings locally which are generally subservient and low lying and set in generous plots. Taken together, these matters form a distinct sense of openness, hierarchy and consistency that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The proposed dormers, due to their scale and number, would subsume and therefore dominate the finished roof slope, resulting in a top-heavy building which would reduce the simple and modest qualities of the existing bungalow. I appreciate architectural styles in the immediate area are varied but the size of the dormers proposed are unreflective of the locality, resulting in incongruous and out of proportion additions to the building.
7. The proposed garage would have noticeable substance in its land take and height. I understand this is to store a specific vehicle, but the scale of the resulting building would both be much larger than other local outbuildings and compete for visual dominance in the plot with the host dwelling. This and the above matters would combine to reduce the areas open qualities and the pleasantness of both its defined primary to outbuilding hierarchy and consistency. This would accordingly harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policies SP3, CP4, DM11, DM14 & DM16 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2014 and the Designing an Extension – A Guide for Householders Supplementary Planning Document which together seek to ensure that development proposals are of a high-quality design and standard.

Other Matters

8. The appeal building faces onto private land with no access to a public right of way. It and its plot are therefore somewhat obscured from public views. That said, it still contributes to the area's qualities as I have explained, and the proposals would be visible to others accessing surrounding buildings and occupiers and users of neighbouring properties and gardens. This matter does not therefore justify the harm I have found.
9. It is not sufficiently clear that the proposed development is the only way of meeting the increased internal space requirements of the incumbent family. I therefore attach moderate weight to this personal need.
10. Works to add a storey to the existing bungalow might be permissible under other legislative provisions, but the relevant class would still require an assessment and the prior approval of the Council. Without a scheme before me I cannot be sure of the outcome of such a process, such that I could not ascribe any more than limited weight to it as a fallback position.
11. A decision notice and plans have been provided for a nearby care home extension. However, the scale, circumstances and nature of the development differ to this much smaller scale residential dwelling. I therefore afford it limited weight.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would not comply with the development plan. I have been given no other compelling reason, taking into account other material considerations advanced, to deviate therefrom. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Street

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR