



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 February 2025

by Eleni Marshall BSc (hons) MSc FRICS FAAV MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/D/24/3355695

15 Coleridge Walk, Hutton, Essex, CM13 2RT

- 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 Ms Olivia Davies against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 24/00909/HHA.
 - The development proposed is demolish garage and construct two storey side and rear and single storey rear extension and new front porch.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I have utilised the Council's description of the development as per the decision notice as I feel it more concisely describes the development.
3. Since the determination of this application, and the submission of this appeal, the revised National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework) came into force on 12 December 2024. The refusal reason generically references the Framework in the context of Section 12. Given the refusal reason and the nature of the changes to the Framework I am satisfied that the changes do not materially impact upon the determination of the appeal in this case.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the appeal site, the attached dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a semi-detached residential dwelling which stands at the very end of Coleridge Walk adjacent to dwellings which face on to Hanging Hill Lane to the west. The site, compared to its immediate neighbours benefits from a relatively large plot, which contributes to the space between the appeal site and the adjacent dwellings, as well as a detached garage. I note that the proposal is a resubmission of a previous refusal, however, I have considered the proposal as it stands before me on its own merits against the Local Plan and taking into account all relevant material considerations. The proposal before me seeks to demolish the existing garage and construct a two-storey side extension which would also be combined with a single storey rear extension and new front porch.
6. At the time of my site visit I found that the appeal site stands within an area which is a mixture of semi-detached and detached two storey dwellings which are, overall,

of similar design. The street scene at this end of Coleridge Walk consists of sets of semi-detached dwellings. Overall, the dwellings along Coleridge Walk, against which the proposals would be viewed, are relatively modest in scale and design as well as being balanced within their respective pairs in terms of bulk, scale and massing. I also note that there is a walkway from Coleridge Walk which leads to Hanging Hill Lane and, at the time of my site visit, I saw several people utilising this walk-through immediately outside the front of the appeal site contributing to general day to day visibility around the appeal site.

7. The two-storey side extension would project in the region of 3.7 metres from the flank wall of the dwelling which would then wrap around the rear of the dwelling with an overall depth in the region of 13.8 metres. The roof has been designed so that it would continue the same pitch as the existing roof with a gable end on the side elevation with the ridge of the proposed extension being set down, from the existing ridge, by in the region of 0.2 metres. At the rear there would be a proposed first floor flat roof which would adjoin the existing pitched roof. Within drawing number 792:16 the front elevations show the 0.2 metre set down; however, this does not appear to be as clearly shown from the rear (south) elevation. Notwithstanding this it is clear, from the plans, planning statement and the Council's assessment of the proposal, that the proposed side extension would be constructed with a set down from the existing ridge height.
8. The appeal site is in a visually prominent location. Whilst it is located at the very end of Coleridge Walk it is, as previously noted, adjacent to a walk through to Hanging Hill Lane from which users would experience a very clear view of the proposal and, most notably, the side elevation of the property is clear in full views over the existing garage buildings to the west from Hanging Hill Lane. The bulk, scale and massing of the proposals would therefore be clearly visible within both the street scene of Coleridge Walk and Hanging Hill Lane, respectively.
9. Whilst I acknowledge that the ridge height does result in some form of set down from the original ridge height of the host dwelling, the reduction is limited. The cumulative extensions would effectively double the size of the host dwelling. In terms of bulk, scale and massing I find that the proposals would cumulatively dominate the host dwelling as a result of disproportionate additions which would also be out of scale with the surrounding site context and highly visible within the immediate locality. In addition, the cumulative bulk, scale, and massing would notably unbalance the uniformity of the existing pair of semi-detached dwellings which the appeal site forms part of. Overall, I find that the proposals are entirely disproportionate and fail, at this stage, to take into account the impact of the proposal upon the host dwelling itself, the pair of semi-detached dwellings as well as the character and appearance of the locality as a result of being highly visible within the street scenes outlined.
10. I note, from the appellant's Statement of Case, that the proposal has been reduced in width with a set back from the front, however, I do not find that this has been successful in sufficiently reducing the bulk of the proposal. The Council also raise concern with regard to the section of flat roof at the rear over the two-storey extension and I do find that this would be visible from the side within the context of views available from Hanging Hill Lane. Whilst this pair of semi-detached dwellings may not be duplicated anywhere else in Coleridge Walk, and I acknowledge there is a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings within the road as a whole,

this would not overcome my concern as to cumulative scale of the proposal in the context of the host dwelling itself insofar as the proposals would be disproportionate, effectively doubling the host dwelling. The proposals, as designed, are not sufficiently subordinate to the host dwelling and in the context of the semi-detached pair would result in them being visually unbalanced as a result of the width of the proposal at two storeys.

11. I note that as a result of removal of the garage there would be in the region of 7 metres available between the house and the side boundary measured at the front, however, regardless of the plot size that is available, this does not overcome concern as to the relationship of the proposal to the host dwelling and the matters which I have raised above. Renovation of the existing dwelling, re-rendering and general improvements as well as replanting of the rear garden to provide biodiversity are noted and acknowledged as positives that would arise out of proposals of this nature, however, in this case I do not find that they would overcome the concern which I have outlined in the context of the main issues above to an extent which would allow this appeal.
12. The proposal would be of a scale and bulk which I find is not compatible with the host dwelling or pair of semi-detached dwellings within which the appeal site stands. The proposal would be highly visible within the street scene of both Coleridge Walk and Hanging Hill Lane and would be of a bulk, scale and massing which would be inappropriate in the context of the character and appearance of the immediate locality. The proposal would be contrary to Brentwood Local Plan 2016 – 2033 (LP) Policy BE14 which outlines that proposals will be required to meet high design standards and respond positively and sympathetically to the site context and build upon existing strengths and characteristics and, where possible, retain or enhance existing features which make a positive contribution to the character, appearance or significance of the local area.
13. The proposal would also be contrary to the National Design Guide 2021 which states that new developments should respond positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary and paragraph 135 of the Framework which seeks to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character including surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

14. I note third party comments which have been submitted in relation to the proposal and, whilst this appeal is not successful for the reasons set out above, I have none the less considered the comments as appropriate within the appeal. A comment has been submitted which makes reference to a report prepared by Howe Chartered Surveyors. I have dealt with matters relating to character and appearance in the main body of this decision letter. Comments have been made as to residential amenity with regard to overbearingness and the presence of windows in the side elevation. The Council do not raise a refusal reason based upon neighbouring residential amenity and I find no reason to conclude differently on such matters taking into account the location of the proposal, set down and ability to condition the windows in question with regard to obscure glazing and limited opening.
15. Concern has been raised within regard to parking arrangements, however, subject to conditions the Highway Authority as a statutory consultee confirm no objection

subject to conditions which could have been applied had the proposal been acceptable in all other regards. The removal of the green verge and/or intent to amend a vehicle cross over is not within the scope of this appeal but I can see that the Council have considered these comments and provided feedback from the Highway Authority as to the points raised. The impact of a proposal upon the value of property is not a material planning consideration.

16. Whilst LP Policy BE13 is noted as of relevance to the proposal within the informative(s) it is not a policy which has been stated within the refusal reason.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Eleni Marshall

INSPECTOR