



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 April 2025

by **SJ Desai BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B1550/D/24/3357541

26 Branksome Avenue, Hockley, Essex SS5 5PF

- 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 Leon Culleton against the decision of Rochford District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00598/FUL.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension with car port & extend front porch roof canopy across.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was revised on 12th December 2024. However, as the parties have had the opportunity to comment on the new document, I am satisfied that any changes to the Framework have not prejudiced the interests of any party in this case. Consequently, in reaching my decision I have therefore had regard to the new Framework published in December 2024.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling within a predominantly suburban residential area. Properties within the street are generally detached houses of a variety of styles and are set back from the road. Most properties have side access to rear gardens, with space to plot boundaries at first floor level being an even more predominant feature giving the area a fairly spacious rhythm and identifiable character clearly apparent in the street scene.
5. The proposed two-storey side extension would result in the existing front canopy being extended across at ground floor level and have a marginal set back from the front building line of the main dwelling at first floor and marginal set down from the ridgeline of the existing roof. It would extend the host dwelling towards the neighbouring detached property, 24a Branksome Avenue, which is positioned close to the shared boundary, and would not have a 1m set in from the shared boundary

at either ground or first floor level as sought by Supplementary Planning Document 2 - Housing Design.

6. The proposed development would close the existing gap between the appeal site dwelling and the neighbouring No. 24a, creating a 'coalescing effect' and cramped appearance when viewed from the street scene, removing the existing sense of spaciousness between buildings. The harmful visual impact would not be mitigated by the limited set back from the front elevation at first floor level.
7. The appellant contends that the existing garage element of No.24a is not habitable space and therefore a reasonable 'isolation space' between the properties would be retained. The harm identified above is in respect of the visual relationship between built form and the impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene. As a result of the height of its pitched roof, the garage element of No.24a would still be read in the street scene when viewing the appeal property, particularly from the west, and I find coalescence would result.
8. The appellant contends that the appeal proposal complies with Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan Policy DM3. For the reasons set out above, I disagree in so far as Policy DM3 is relevant to Policy DM1 in respect of local character, the existing street pattern and achieving a positive relationship with existing and nearby buildings.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. As such, it would conflict with Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan (2014) and the related Supplementary Planning Document 2 – *Housing Design* (2007). These seek, amongst other matters, development to promote the character of the locality, contribute positively to the built environment and that side extensions maintain an appropriate level of spaciousness and avoid coalescence of adjacent properties. The proposal would also conflict with the Framework, which seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive and add to the overall quality of the area.

Other matters

10. I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to the example of a similar extension at 10 Link Road, Rayleigh put to me being accepted. On the evidence presented I therefore cannot be certain that they represent a direct parallel to the development. I have, in any event, determined the appeal based on its own planning merits.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, the development conflicts with the development plan and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate that the proposed development should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

SJ DESAI

INSPECTOR