



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/D1590/D/25/3360889

396 Westbourne Grove, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS5 0PY

- 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 Mr Ben Saunders against the decision of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01590/FULH.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolish garage and store to side, erect two storey side extension, single storey rear extension with roof lights, raise ridge height and form first floor extension with dormer to front and alterations to front and side elevation.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the Council's description of the development proposed, which I have used in the bullet header above, as it more accurately describes the development. For the avoidance of doubt, I also confirm that my determination of the appeal is based on the drawings submitted with the original application.
3. 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 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

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property contains a modest detached bungalow located at the end of a row of six similar dwellings that share similar architectural features and proportions, albeit their designs have some variation. Whilst these dwellings have an attractive and largely uniform appearance including hipped roofs, bay windows and chimneys, other dwellings along Westbourne Grove are characterised by detached and semi-detached, one and two storey dwellings of a mix of varying styles and materials. Larger dwellings, such as the adjacent 394 Westbourne Grove, are often set in wider plot frontages.

6. Whilst there is no consistent built form, this section of Westbourne Grove has a spacious, low-density appearance with grass verges and street trees adding to its suburban character. Dwellings, including the appeal dwelling, are visible as being set back from the road and characterised by a variety of separation gaps between, or around built form, giving the area a fairly spacious and identifiable character clearly apparent in the street scene
7. The proposed development would significantly alter the form, scale and appearance of the appeal dwelling, which would effectively be read as a two-storey dwelling rather than an extended bungalow. As a result, I find it would not successfully integrate, be respectful, or subservient to the appeal dwelling and it is not apparent that the proposed detailing draws any reference from it, except for a rendered finish.
8. Notwithstanding, given the varied character of built form within the street scene the impact of this on the character and appearance of the appeal property and area is, to some extent, tempered. However, the proposal would introduce a significant amount of built form within a relatively tight plot frontage. As a result of the overall scale, bulk and prominence of the front elevation, contributed to by the projecting front gable and gabled roof dormer, the proposed development would result in a cramped appearance to the appeal property removing the existing sense of spaciousness and would represent a prominent and overbearing addition in the street scene.
9. I agree with the appellant that, in principle, there may not be unacceptable juxtaposition within the street scene through the redevelopment of a single storey dwelling, when noting the appeal property is at the end of a row of bungalows and adjacent to the two-storey dwelling at No.394. However, given the harmful impact described above and the relative high level of visibility of the appeal property when viewed from the north above the roof forms of the adjacent bungalows, in this case, the resultant harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property and area is compounded.
10. The proposed development has taken design references from a number of nearby properties, including Nos.382 and 394. However, it is not considered that the form, detailing and articulation proposed successfully address the overall impression of scale or the loss of the sense of spaciousness within and around the appeal property.
11. I therefore find the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area. As such, it would conflict with Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2007), Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document (2015) and the advice contained within the Southend-on-Sea Design and Townscape Guide (2009). These require, amongst other matters, that development adds to the quality of the area, respects the character of the site and secures good relationships with existing development. 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

12. The Council and appellant agree that concerns regarding overlooking could be dealt with by way of condition if the appeal was to succeed. I find no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

13. 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 development should be determined otherwise than in accordance with it. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

SJ DESAI

INSPECTOR