



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2025

by **N Perrins MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D1590/D/25/3364525

14 Leigh Park Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Southend-on-Sea SS9 2DU

- 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 Gary Bloxham against the decision of Southend-on-Sea City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00223/FULH.
 - The development proposed is a single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey side extension at 14 Leigh Park Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Southend-on-Sea SS9 2DU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00223/FULH, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: (i) Location Plan, (ii) Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plans and Elevations Drawing no. 1028-01 Revision C, (iii) Existing and Proposed Site Plans and Location Plan Drawing no. 1028-02 Revision B, and (iv) Proposed Finishes Drawing no. 1028-03 Revision C.
 - 3) The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with the materials specified on the application form and on the approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Leigh Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling on the southern side of Leigh Park Road. The appeal property forms part of a linear run of similarly designed and appearing semi-detached properties (Nos 14 to 36). The ground levels fall away from the road to where No 14 is positioned and where the appeal proposal would be constructed.

4. The appeal site is located within the Leigh Conservation Area (CA). The duty under Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) require that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. The Leigh CA comprises an area north of the nearby railway where the land rises up Leigh Hill. The Leigh Conservation Area Appraisal 2022 (CAA) identifies that the significance of the CA is derived from a number of factors including local topography, varied traditional architecture and the historic evolution of the settlement as a working marine village that expanded upward into the cliffs.
5. There are various individual and groups of buildings that provide distinctive landscape and townscape features that contribute positively to the special character and appearance of the CA. These includes Nos 14 to 36 Leigh Park Road, which are identified in the CAA as being a group of semi-detached early 20th century houses. The CAA notes that the composition on all these properties is the same, mirrored left to right all with curved bay windows. The black and white paintwork is noted as being important to the character and appearance of the group. The original part of the appeal property displays these key features although the existing side extension does not; this has a rudimentary design that does not relate positively or coherently with the host dwelling.
6. Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Core Strategy 2007 (CS) requires development to respect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and contribute to the creation of a high-quality urban environment. Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Document 2015 (DMD) require extensions to add to the overall quality of the area, respect the character of the site and local context and to make a positive contribution to the character of the original building. Policy DM5 of the DMD sets out the approach to assessing development that affects a heritage asset. Although not part of the development plan, the Southend Design and Townscape Guide 2009 (DTG) provides guidance on a range of design matters including for development affecting heritage assets.
7. The appeal proposal comprises the erection of a single storey side extension that would be constructed to the front of, and integrated with, the existing side extension. The proposal would be rendered white to match the host property, which will result in the removal of the existing incongruous timber cladding. This is a positive aspect of the proposal that will ensure the external walls of the side extension will appear as significantly more cohesive with the host dwelling in visual terms than the current arrangement.
8. I note the Council are, however, concerned that the dual pitched roof to the front of the proposal would not relate well with the remaining flat roof section in terms of impact on the street scene given the site's open aspect at the end of the run of dwellings on the road.
9. However, as observed on my site inspection, the area where the extension would be positioned is considerably below the road level due to the topography of the appeal site. This would mean that the flat roof section would, in practice, not be prominently visible when viewed in the street scene as it would sit inconspicuously behind the dual pitched roof. The dual pitched roof would, therefore, be the most prominently visible part of the proposal within the street scene. The dual pitched roof would appear in its context as a complimentary and integrated design feature when read in conjunction with the host property's overall roof form. Given it would

be set back from the host dwelling's frontage, it would also not appear out of place with the more varied roofscape that exists on this part of the street immediately adjacent to the appeal property to the east.

10. Moreover, the inclusion of the black bay window on the front elevation would positively reflect a key design feature, and colour palette, that exists on the properties that make up Nos 14-36. The proposed development would, therefore, be an enhancement in design and appearance terms over the existing side extension. This is an approach advocated in the DTG, which in Section 9 Paragraph 302 requires extensions in CAs to positively enhance its character and appearance.
11. Overall, due to the levels of the land that exist at the appeal site and the complimentary design of the front section of the proposal that draws upon key positive features of the host dwelling, the proposal would be a suitably subordinate, subtle and cohesive addition to the property. The proposal would also appear as a visual improvement to the incongruously designed existing side extension. Accordingly, it would not materially harm or unacceptably disrupt the appearance of the host property and how it is read in its associative group of similarly designed buildings. As such, I find that the proposal would not harm the significance of the Leigh CA and would, as a minimum, preserve its special character and appearance as a working marine village.
12. For the reasons stated, the proposal accords with the requirements of Policies KP2 and CP4 of the CS and Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the DMD and guidance within the DTG. The proposal is also consistent with the heritage provisions of Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Other Matters

13. I note there is reference in the Council Officer's report to the submitted plans not showing the change in levels at the site. Whilst that is the case, the plans clearly show what is proposed in terms of its scale, position, design and dimensions and, even without the ground levels being shown, they are sufficient to accurately depict what has been granted planning permission.

Conditions

14. I have considered the suggested conditions by the appellant and the Council having regard to paragraph 57 of the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. I agree with the Council that a condition imposing the standard time limit is necessary for clarity. I also agree that conditions are needed to list the approved plans and requirements for materials, to be clear on what has been approved and ensure the character of the area is preserved.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and considering all matters raised, I conclude that the proposal would not result in harm to the special character or appearance of the Leigh Conservation Area and the appeal is allowed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR