



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 July 2025

by **H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/D/25/3367964

448 High Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5AQ

- 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 & Mrs Sam & Jodie Banyard against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0232/FUL.
 - The development proposed is garage conversion and creation of garage & infill first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. In Part E of the appeal form a different wording has been entered, but as the parties have not provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed I have used the one given in the original application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached house set back from the road behind its parking area. It has an attached garage to one side, that projects forward of the house. The street scene is mixed in terms of dwelling styles and siting, with the adjacent house, 450 High Road (No.450), sitting much closer to the road than the appeal property. Within this mixed street scene, parking arrangements vary, but garaging projecting deeply in front of the dwelling served is not typical in the street scene. For the most part, garaging in the vicinity appears subordinate as a result of its low-key design or its size and siting.
5. Although set back behind the front of No.450, the appeal property is nevertheless visible in the street scene due to the openness of the front garden. Extending forward of the existing garage means that the proposal would project deeply in front of the house, creating a sprawling layout that would be out of keeping with the more balanced design of the host house. I acknowledge that on approach from the south the garage would be seen against the backdrop of the side wall of No.450, but its

- size and scale would nevertheless ‘draw the eye’, and it would appear as a bulky, prominent and visually intrusive addition to the street scene.
6. I do not consider that a hipped roof would be unacceptable in principle due to the design of the existing front bays to the house. However, the roof design would be out of keeping with that of the main house, and the overly tall addition would appear overly dominant. This would conflict with guidance in RDG7 of the Castle Point Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2013 (SPD), for the roof design of any development to be compatible with the dwelling, and to avoid appearing prominent or dominant. The blank road-facing elevation would not be a positive feature in the street scene, and would contrast with the window pattern of the main house. This would not reflect guidance in SPD RDG8, for detailing for all developments to be consistent with the overall architectural approach of the dwelling, and to not result in prominent, dominant, alien or incongruous features which detract from the visual appearance of the dwelling or the public realm.
 7. I note the appellants’ view that the existing garage is detrimental to the character and appearance of the dwelling, and that its flat roof is at odds with the SPD. However, the existing garage is not an overly prominent feature on the property or in the street scene, and any benefit in replacing the flat roof would be offset by the visual harm of an extension of the size, design and siting proposed.
 8. The appellants have drawn attention to other garages and front projections in High Road, some of which appear more successfully integrated in the street scene than others. No planning permissions for these developments have been identified, but viewed on the ground, none appeared to be directly comparable to the design and scale of the appeal proposal; nor in their relationship to the host dwelling served or the street scene. Front projecting garages in the area do not appear to be as deep as proposed in this case. The deep, blank roadside elevation of the garage at 528 High Road is not typical in the street scene, and would not justify acceptance of the appeal proposal. The suggested condition for wall-mounted flower boxes to the side of the garage would not resolve its overall size and scale and its adverse visual impact.
 9. I share the Council’s assessment with regards to the proposed first-floor extension, and agree that it would appear visually integrated with the existing dwelling. However, as this element is linked to the roof alterations to the existing garage, it is not clearly severable from the remainder of the appeal development. As such, I am unable to issue a split decision.
 10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the appeal property and the street scene, contrary to Policy EC2 of the Castle Point Borough Local Plan 1998, in that its scale, siting, design and layout would not be appropriate to its setting. It would not accord with guidance in SPD RDG7 and RDG8, nor the design objectives aimed at achieving well-designed places set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
 11. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Lock

INSPECTOR