



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2025

by **C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/D/25/3371202

7 Joseph Clibbon Drive, Chelmsford Garden Community, Chelmsford, CM1 6AS

- 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 A Hunt against the decision of Chelmsford City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00506/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension to rear of a detached dwelling house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within a wider residential estate, which I saw at my site visit is a carefully planned community of housing and associated facilities. The architecture is contemporary, with an urban design concept that shows clear balance and consistency taken in the layout and design approach for buildings. It is also evident that landscaping, open space and views across the estate form part of that overall well-planned community.
4. The property is one of a group of houses fronting Joseph Clibbon Drive of consistent design, where the front, rear and side elevations are clearly visible in long views along the road and from the rear: the estate has undoubtedly been designed and laid out to allow for views from Armistice Way to the south west and the adjoining path. In views towards the property, including from the rear, the house can be seen to closely match the adjoining houses to the south east and the Robinson Gate properties to the north west.
5. The proposed development would see the existing rear gable extended at first floor to the same width as existing, with a slight step-down in height, and be to the depth of the existing first floor roof terrace. This would be a substantial addition, readily apparent in public views from the south west. The original simple form of the property would be unbalanced by the depth, width and height of this addition. Moreover, the new configuration of the building would appear very discordant in the street scene due to the imbalance with adjoining houses: it is the scale, design, position and form of the extension that leads to notable harm to the appearance of the house and the wider character of the area.

6. The extension would be weatherboarded and introduce a different pattern of fenestration than seen at the property at present. Whilst such materials and design might be suited in certain circumstances, the contrast with the adjoining properties at first floor – which have rendered rear gables and consistent fenestration widely visible in the area – would further undermine the consistency that is seen in the grouping of houses.
7. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires planning decisions to ensure that developments are, amongst other matters, sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, and that they maintain a strong sense of place using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials. Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan 2020 seeks high quality and inclusive design. It requires development to respond to context, stating that planning permission will be granted where development respects the character and appearance of the area, and is compatible with its surroundings having regard to scale, siting, form, architecture, materials, boundary treatments and landscape. The proposals fail to have regard to the local character and existing sense of place and, due to the reasons given, this leads to harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
8. The appellant states that corner plots provide the opportunity for architectural expression and variation. Whilst that might be the case in certain circumstances, in this instance this corner plot has been carefully designed in the original concept of the estate, with regard to the adjoining houses and the other corner plot to the north west. The proposed extension would undoubtedly upset this careful balance.
9. The appellant has also drawn my attention to other extensions in the estate, as part of the evolution of the wider area as householders adapt their homes, and I viewed these at my site visit. There is no dispute such extensions have changed the original appearance of individual properties and are visible from public view, but crucially they have not altered a balanced composition of a grouping of houses of consistent design to an extent where there is harm to that original balanced grouping. The examples shown to me are for extensions of modest proportions and design which are not imposing to the host property or strong sense of place of the wider area. I have determined the current appeal on its own merits and, for the reasons given above, it is evident to me the development does not appropriately respond to its context. My conclusions thus remain the same on the main issue that there is conflict with the Framework and the Local Plan, and there is harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
10. I acknowledge the appellant's wish to provide additional accommodation for a growing family. However, I must balance that personal desire against the wider considerations of acknowledged importance, which includes the matter of effect on character and appearance. It is my overall conclusion that the conflict with national and local planning policy on the main issue outweighs other matters, and hence the appeal is dismissed.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR