



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 January 2026

by **D Ellis MPlan MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/D/25/3373027

82 Downham Road, Ramsden Heath, Billericay, Essex CM11 1QD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 1, Class AA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Fiona Meade against the decision of Chelmsford City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00905/HHPAA.
 - The development proposed is an additional storey.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Schedule 2, Part 1, Class AA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (the GPDO), permits development consisting of the enlargement of a dwellinghouse by construction of up to two additional storeys, where the existing dwellinghouse comprises two or more storeys, together with any reasonably necessary engineering operations.
3. Development is permitted under Class AA subject to limitations and conditions and a requirement that the developer applies for prior approval to the local planning authority.
4. The Council concluded that, subject to consideration of relevant matters of prior approval, the proposal would comply with the limitations and conditions set out under Class AA of the GPDO, such that it would fall within the scope of such permitted development rights. On the evidence before me I see no reason to conclude differently. The Council has, however, raised concerns in respect of the effect of the development upon the external appearance of the host property. It has been held that such an assessment extends to the context of the dwellinghouse. My consideration of the appeal shall therefore focus on this matter.
5. In refusing the application, the Council cited policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan (2020) (LP). However, the principle of the development is established by the GPDO, and the prior approval provisions do not require regard to be had to the development plan¹. I can therefore only have regard to any part of this policy insofar as it sets out material which assists in assessing of the effect of the proposal on the external appearance of the dwellinghouse.

¹ GPDO Schedule 2, Part 1, Class AA, Paragraph AA.3(12)b

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether prior approval should be granted having regard to the external appearance of the dwellinghouse.

Reasons

7. The street has a mix of bungalows and two-storey detached properties of various designs. The appeal property is at the end of a group of four bungalows of a similar height and with front dormers at the first-floor level, albeit the appeal property has a flat-roof dormer and the other bungalows in the group have pitched-roof dormers. Despite the dormers, the properties have maintained consistency in having a low eaves level with the accommodation in the roof being visually subordinate.
8. Windsor Road is to the east of the appeal site and acts as a visual gap between the appeal site and the two two-storey dwellings of a similar design beyond. The dwellings to the west of the group of four bungalows are of a greater variety of heights and designs. Notwithstanding this, the group of four bungalows generally have a cohesive appearance and rhythm which makes a significant contribution to the character of the area.
9. The proposal would see the bungalow extended upwards to create a first floor with both the ridge and eaves levels significantly increased. Although the proposed pitched-roof dormers would be in keeping with the other bungalows in the group, the resulting two-storey building would not reflect the form and massing of others in this group. Consequently, the extension would be discordant with the group of bungalows and the wider street scene and would detract from its character and appearance.
10. My attention has been drawn to other developments including upwards extensions which have been granted planning permission. Full details of the proposal at 68 Downham Road² have not been provided, however the property is not situated in a group of properties of a similar appearance and the adjacent properties are of varying scales, heights and designs. For the appeal at Linden, Margaretting³, the Inspector also noted that there was a significant variation in buildings height, scale, form, and appearance at that location, which is not the case regarding the appeal site and the group of bungalows.
11. The replacement dwelling at 72 Downham Road⁴ appeared to replace a previous two-storey dwelling, unlike the appeal proposal. 248 Stansted Road⁵ in Bishops Stortford, 48 Connaught Gardens⁶ in Braintree and 26 Wood Dale in Great Baddow⁷ are situated adjacent to two-storey dwellings, so an additional storey would not appear out of place in that context. For the appeal at Broomfield Farm⁸, the dwelling was in a relatively isolated position and away from other dwellings, unlike the appeal site. For these reasons, these other examples are not directly comparable to the appeal scheme, which has been determined on its own merits.

² Planning application ref. 24/01353/FUL

³ Appeal ref. APP/W1525/D/24/3346757

⁴ Planning application ref. 14/0062/FUL

⁵ Planning application ref. 3/25/1105/ASDPN

⁶ Planning application ref. 21/00486/HHPA

⁷ Planning application ref. 23/01494/HHPAA

⁸ Appeal ref. APP/W1525/D/21/3289359

12. As such, I find that the external appearance of the dwellinghouse would not be acceptable and the proposal would therefore fail to accord with the requirements of paragraph AA.2.(3)(a)(ii) of Class AA. Furthermore, the proposal would conflict with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires, among other things, that developments are visually attractive and sympathetic to local character. The proposal would also conflict with LP Policy DM23, insofar as it seeks for development to respect the character and appearance of the area in which it is located, and to be compatible with its surroundings including with regards to scale.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Ellis

INSPECTOR