
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 December 2025 by J Kirkaldy BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/D/25/3373007

7 Tollgate, Thundersley, Benfleet SS7 3UX

- 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 Luke Pittaway against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0491/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with front and rear dormers for additional bedroom space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters and Main Issue

3. The above description is from the application form. The decision notice refers to a hip to gable roof extension which would facilitate the loft conversion element. It is shown on the plans. I have taken this into account. The Council has not objected to the principle of a rear dormer, and I have no reason to disagree. I have therefore focused on this hip to gable and front dormer and, specifically, their effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal building is a semi-detached hip roofed bungalow on a residential cul de sac. It is slightly elevated from the road and sits centrally in a row of three pairs. Whilst each pair slightly differs in precise detail, the consistency of their original single full span hipped roof, land take, general configuration and subsequent symmetrical feel contributes positively to the character and appearance of the street scene. The consistency of the wider area is further emphasised by, with a very limited number of exceptions, hipped and gabled roofs.
5. The Castle Point Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2013) (SPD) provides guidance on roof development stating that dormers should be an ancillary feature and must not dominate the roofscape. It further states that front dormers visible within the street scene should have pitched roofs unless an original design feature of the dwelling indicates otherwise and roof alterations resulting in loss of symmetry in the roofscape to a pair or groups will be refused.

6. The new gable element of the scheme would delete part of the hipped roof. Along with the forward facing dormer, the front elevation would be unacceptably imbalanced, eroding the pleasant sense of original symmetry between the pair of semi-detached buildings and how they relate to each other as a group. Despite it being set down from the ridge and in from the sides of the existing roof, the scale, flat roof and box like shape of the front dormer would be unacceptably prominent, make the building appear top heavy and jar with the prevailing roofscape of the wider area.
7. Whilst the Council does not object to a rear dormer, this is largely on principle grounds from what I can gather, and they do not say explicitly the one in this case would be acceptable. Indeed, it's size and position on the building would be reliant on the hip to gable conversion which would be harmful for the above reasons.
8. With this and the above in mind, the appeal scheme would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would fail to accord with Policy EC2 of the Castle Point Local Plan (1998) which seeks a high standard of design. For the same reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places.
9. Numbers 1 and 2 Tollgate occupy a corner plot close to the road junction and are positioned forward of the established building line, with a substantial gap to the neighbouring properties. As a result, they read somewhat detached from the prevailing street scene and thus not the same context as the appeal site and, more importantly, the group within which it finds itself. The same can be said of the alterations to the pair at Numbers 3 and 4, the changes to the latter seeming to be more historic and they do not occupy a central position within an otherwise consistent row.
10. These developments do not represent sufficiently direct parallels with the appeal proposal such that I would change my findings. In any event, their existence does not justify development which would otherwise be harmful, and I am not aware of the full circumstances which lead to them being permitted. If indeed they were.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above the appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan and material considerations do not indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. I therefore recommend the appeal should be dismissed.

J Kirkaldy

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR