The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

By Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19th December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/D/16/3157445
Ramcrest, Lowford Hill, Burseldon, Southampton SO31 8ER

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Simon Hare against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
- The application Ref: F/16/78431 dated 19 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 15 July 2016.
- The development proposed is front single storey extension with a pitch roof and single storey rear extension with a flat roof and atrium.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council amended the description of development to include reference to the raised decking to the rear and I have also taken this part of the proposal into account in my consideration of the appeal.

3. The decision notice refers to the receipt of amended plans during the application stage, whereby the Appellant reduced the depth of the front extension from 6m to 3.3m. I have considered the appeal on the basis of the plans that were determined by the Council, which included this amendment.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing property and on the local area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a modest detached bungalow set back from and at a higher level than the access off Portsmouth Road (Lowford Hill). It is situated within a predominantly residential area with a mix of houses, bungalows and chalet bungalows. Although a number of the properties have been extended, including with front and side extensions, these are generally modest in scale in relation to the host properties. The land also generally rises along Portsmouth Road and Lowford Hill from east to west.

6. The proposal would extend to the front and to the rear. Although the rear extension would be relatively extensive in length compared with the existing property, it would not extend in width beyond the existing property and its roof form would be subservient to the main roof of the existing property. However, the front extension would wrap around the front and part of the side of the existing property, and extend across most of the width of the site. Its bulk and massing, exacerbated with its contrived roof form would completely overwhelm the scale and proportions of the existing property. There would be a very discordant and unsatisfactory relationship between the proposed roof form to the front extension and the original roof form. The overall mass and scale of the proposed extensions, and particularly the front/side extension and its roof form, would as a result materially harm the character and appearance of the existing modest property.

7. Given the stepped building frontage along Lowford Hill and Portsmouth Road and the forward siting of the adjacent property to the east, I agree that the proposed forward projection of the front extension would not be out of step with the general building line in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. However, and although there are limited views of the property from the street, and particularly from directly outside of the property, the front extension and the very uncomfortable juxtaposition of the roof form of the proposed extension with the existing roof would be seen in glimpsed and more open views, particularly when approaching the property from the east along Portsmouth Road (Lowford Hill). This discordant feature would be visually intrusive and out of character with the surrounding pattern of development.

8. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and of the local area. This would conflict with Policy 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (2001 – 2011) and the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document: *Quality Places*, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), all of which seek a high standard of design which respects the local context. The Council's reason for refusal also refers to Policy DM1 of the submitted Borough Local Plan 2011-2029. I have not been advised as to the status of this Plan but to the extent that the draft policy continues the objectives of the adopted policy and accords with the Framework I have taken it into account. I consider that the proposal would also conflict with this draft Policy.

9. The Appellant has contended that the proposed extension would not be out of character with other extensions that have been permitted in the vicinity, including front extensions. Each application must be considered on its individual merits and I did not see any extensions in the local vicinity that were comparable to the proposal before me.

10. I have been provided with copies of the email exchange with the Council during the application process, and the suggestion by the Council of a reduced depth for the front extension. However, my decision is necessarily based on the planning merits of the scheme before me. Good design should be the aim of all those involved in the design process and I find this scheme to fall well below the high standards that the Framework and the development plan policies seek to promote.

11. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR