

1 The Proposal

- 1.1 The application seeks planning permission to construct a first floor extension to an existing hip-roofed, two bedroomed bungalow to form a two storey house. The proposed development would provide four bedrooms, (with two en-suites) and a bathroom at first floor.
- 1.2 The footprint of the existing dwelling at its largest measures 11.3m deep and 11.9m wide. The height of the eaves and the maximum height are 2.5m and 5.05m respectively. The proposal increases the eaves and maximum height to 5.35m and 8.4m respectively while retaining the existing footprint. The roof would be gabled in form and the existing chimneys would be removed. Elements of the existing fenestration including the existing bay windows and some of the ground floor windows would be retained. The majority of the proposed fenestration would mirror the design of the existing dwelling including through the continuation of the bay windows onto the first floor.
- 1.3 The existing garage to the rear of the site would be retained with a new door and its external façade replaced to match the altered main dwelling.
- 1.4 The dwelling would be externally finished in roof tiles, render and white uPVC windows and doors.

2 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is on the north side of Western Road to the east corner of its junction with Vernon Road. The site contains a detached bungalow with hardstanding and a driveway to the eastern boundary.
- 2.2 The surrounding area is mainly characterised by two storey semi-detached and detached properties of varying designs and styles with some common features. Interspersed within the two storey properties are pairs of semi-detached bungalows and detached chalets. The majority of the properties within the streetscene are rendered.
- 2.3 The site is not located within a conservation area or subject to any site specific planning policies.

3 Planning Considerations

- 3.1 The main considerations in relation to this application are the principle of development, design and impact on the character of the area, parking and highways issues, impact on residential amenity and CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy).

4 Appraisal

Principle of Development

National Planning Policy Framework (2019); Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP1, KP2, CP3 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1, DM3 and DM15 and the advice contained within the Design & Townscape Guide (2009).

- 4.1 Policy DM3 of the Development Management Document (2015) states that *“the conversion or redevelopment of single storey dwellings (bungalows) will generally be resisted. Exceptions will be considered where the proposal:*
- I. Does not create an unacceptable juxtaposition within the streetscene that would harm the character and appearance of the area; and*
 - II. Will not result in a net loss of housing accommodation suitable for the needs of Southend’s older residents having regard to the Lifetime Homes Standard”*
- 4.2 The streetscene is made up of a variety of building types and forms of both bungalows and two storey dwellings. It is considered that given this mixture of built forms in the surrounding area, the formation of a second storey would not be out of character in the streetscene in principle.
- 4.3 In this instance the property is a bungalow and the Agent has confirmed that the proposed development of the dwelling would meet the criteria of building regulation M4 (2) regarding accessibility and adaptability. The proposal is therefore acceptable in principle and compliant with Policy DM3 (part 4) (ii) above.
- 4.4 This proposal is considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and Core Strategy Policies KP2 and CP4. Also of relevance are policies DM1 and DM3 which address design quality matters. These policies and guidance support extensions to properties in most cases but require that such alterations and extensions respect the existing character and appearance of the building. The dwelling is situated within a residential area and extensions and alterations to the property are considered acceptable in principle, subject to detailed considerations discussed below.

Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

National Planning Policy Framework (2019); Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP1, KP2 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3 and advice in the Design & Townscape Guide (2009).

- 4.6 The key element within all relevant policies is that good design should be a fundamental requirement of new development in order to achieve high quality living environments. Its importance is reflected in the NPPF, in Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Core Strategy and also in Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document. The Design and Townscape Guide states that *“the Borough Council is committed to good design and will seek to create attractive, high-quality living environments.”*
- 4.7 Policy KP2 of the Core Strategy states new development should *“respect the character and scale of the existing neighbourhood where appropriate”*.
- 4.8 Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy requires that development proposals should *“maintain and enhance the amenities, appeal and character of residential areas, securing good relationships with existing development, and respecting the scale and nature of that development”*.
- 4.9 Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document states that all development should *“add to the overall quality of the area and respect the character of the site, its local context and surroundings in terms of its architectural approach, height, size, scale, form, massing, density, layout, proportions, materials, townscape and/or landscape setting, use, and detailed design features”*.
- 4.10 Paragraph 375 of the Design and Townscape Guide states that *“In a few cases it may be possible to extend a property upward by adding an additional storey however this will only be appropriate where it does not conflict with the character of the street.”* Paragraph 374 states that *“Extensions that raise the ridge height of an existing building are only considered acceptable in principle where they complement the design of the original building and where they do not break the continuity of the streetscene or appear overbearing.”*
- 4.11 Western Road has a mixed character consisting of pre-dominantly semi-detached and detached houses of varying designs and styles with some common features which are seen throughout the area, such as front gables, two storey bay windows and evenly sized windows. The height of the surrounding houses is predominantly two storey within the streetscene, although there are bungalows and chalets present.

- 4.12 The existing dwelling is a shallow hipped roof detached bungalow and the proposal is to convert this into a gabled roof two storey dwelling. The area comprises predominantly two storey dwellings and chalet style dwellings. It is therefore considered that the increase in the height of the dwelling to create a two storey dwelling would not result in the dwelling being materially out of keeping or harmful to the character of the surrounding area in this regard.
- 4.13 In relation to the design characteristics of the surrounding area, the area is of a mixed character of dwellings and hence, specific reference cannot be drawn from the detailed design of the surrounding properties. The proposal would extend the original front ground floor features of the gable projection and the bay windows at first floor, which is positive and adds interest to the dwelling's appearance and contributes to the character of the streetscene.
- 4.14 The first floor fenestration would align with the ground floor windows which is positive. The roof design, would not result in a dominant structure in the streetscene and it would not appear out of keeping with the character of the dwelling or the streetscene.
- 4.15 The proposed finishing materials would satisfactorily relate to the existing dwelling and during the processing of this application the contemporary, minimally detailed elevations of the extended building have been amended to add more articulation and interest. The building is contemporary in form and appearance but, on balance, the proposal is sufficiently in-keeping with its surroundings as not to cause material harm to local character or the streetscene and would be consistent with materials of the dwellings within the vicinity.
- 4.16 The proposal is therefore considered, on balance to be acceptable and policy compliant in terms its design and the character of the surrounding area.

Impact on Residential Amenity

National Planning Policy Framework (2019); Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP1, KP2 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3 and the Design & Townscape Guide (2009).

- 4.17 The Design and Townscape Guide Paragraph 343; under the heading of Alterations and Additions to Existing Residential Buildings states that amongst other criteria, that *'extensions must respect the amenity of neighbouring buildings and ensure not to adversely affect light, outlook or privacy of the habitable rooms in adjacent properties'*. In addition to this Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document also states that development should *"Protect the amenity of the site, immediate neighbours, and surrounding area, having regard to privacy, overlooking, outlook, noise and disturbance, visual enclosure, pollution, and daylight and sunlight."*

- 4.18 The proposed extensions would increase the height of the dwelling and therefore has the potential to impact the immediately adjacent properties, 60 Vernon Road and 39 Western Road.
- 4.19 No 39 Western Road to the east is a two storey dwellinghouse which has a similar depth to the application dwelling. No 39 was recently granted planning permission (18/00776/FULH) for a part single and part two storey rear extensions which has no windows on its side elevation facing towards No 41.
- 4.20 The proposed alterations to No 41 would not increase the footprint of the building but would erect a first floor above the existing dwelling. With regards to fenestration facing towards No 39, a first floor window some 4.15m from the site boundary is proposed that is the only means of light and outlook to a bedroom. The existing fenestration on the ground floor would be altered with enlarged windows proposed. Given that there are no side facing windows at the neighbouring No 39 and the existing footprint of No 41 is retained, it is not considered that the proposed alterations would have a materially harmful impact on No 39's light, outlook or privacy.
- 4.21 To the north of the application site is No 60 Vernon Road, a detached bungalow situated on slightly higher ground than No 41 Western Road. The separation between the rear building line of No 41 and this property is some 4.8m. No 60 has an obscure glazed window facing south that is understood to serve a bathroom.
- 4.22 The proposed alterations and enlargement to No 41 would retain the existing separation but results in an extra storey. The rear elevation includes a window and doors at ground floor level and two new obscure glazed windows at first floor level, to serve a bathroom and en-suite. These first floor windows can be conditioned to be obscure glazed with limited openings in perpetuity to protect the privacy of No 60's rear garden. The footprint of No 41 would not infringe on a notional 45 degree guideline taken from No 60's nearest rear facing windows. It is therefore considered that, on balance, the proposal would not result in material overshadowing, overlooking, loss of light or privacy, harmfully increased sense of enclosure or an unacceptable level of dominance to No 60.
- 4.23 On the western side of the property is a mature street tree. As the proposed alterations and enlargement would not extend the footprint of this building it is considered that the proposal would not result in any material harm to this tree.
- 4.24 The proposal would not materially harm neighbouring amenities through loss of light, outlook or privacy or sense of enclosure. The proposal is therefore acceptable and policy compliant in the above regards.

Highways and Transport Issues

National Planning Policy Framework (2019); Core Strategy (2007) Policy CP3 and Development Management Document (2015) Policy DM15.

- 4.25 Policy DM15 of the Development Management Document requires that dwellings with 2+ bedrooms are provided with a minimum of two parking spaces. The development would retain adequate space on the side driveway to ensure that two cars can be accommodated. No harm would be caused to highway safety or parking conditions. The impact on parking and highways is therefore acceptable and policy compliant.

Community Infrastructure Levy

CIL Charging Schedule (2015).

- 4.26 The proposed extension to the existing property equates to less than 100sqm of new floorspace and as such the development benefits from a Minor Development Exemption under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and as such no charge is payable.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Having taken all material planning considerations into account, it is found that, subject to compliance with the attached conditions, the proposed development would, on balance, be acceptable and compliant with the objectives of the relevant development plan policies and guidance. The proposal would have an acceptable impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and the character and appearance of the application site, the streetscene and the locality more widely. The proposal would not result in any adverse impact on parking provision or highway safety. This application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

6 Planning Policy Summary

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- 6.2 Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP1 (Spatial Strategy), KP2 (Development Principles), CP3 (Transport and Accessibility) and CP4 (Environment & Urban Renaissance)
- 6.3 Development Management Document (2015): DM1 (Design Quality), DM3 (Efficient and Effective use of land) and DM15 (Sustainable Transport Management)

6.4 Design & Townscape Guide (2009)

6.5 CIL Charging Schedule (2015)

7 Consultation Responses

7.1 **Neighbour Consultation** - 5 neighbouring properties were notified of the application and two letters of representation have been received which are summarised as follows:

- Harmful effect on residential amenity.
- The proposed first floor windows of the dwelling would overlook the neighbouring rear gardens which would be made worse by the relatively small size of the rear garden. **[Officer Comment: A condition is recommended to require these windows to be permanently obscured glazed].**
- The proposed increase in height would block out sunlight from neighbouring gardens.
- The existing site is cramped and an extra storey would be inappropriate.
- The proposal would harm the character of the bungalow through its modern design which would be out of keeping with the surrounding area.
- Demolition of building is a shame **[Officer Comment: Demolition is not proposed]**

Officer Comment: These concerns are noted and they have been taken into account in the assessment of the application. However, on balance, they are not found to represent a reasonable basis to refuse planning permission in the circumstances of this case.

7.2 This application was called into Development Control Committee by Councillor Mulroney.

7.3 **Leigh Town Council** - No Objection

7.4 **Highways** - No Objection

8 Relevant Planning History

8.1 No relevant planning history

9 Recommendation

9.1 MEMBERS ARE RECOMMENDED TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions:

- 01 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans – 18_1089-100, 18_1089-101, 18_1089-102-A, 18_1089-103-A, 18_1089-104-A, 18_1089-105, 18_1089-107 and 18_1089-SP**

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan.

- 02 The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.**

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 03 All new work to the outside of the building, including fenestration, must match existing original work in terms of the choice of materials, method of construction and finished appearance. This applies unless differences are shown on the drawings hereby approved or are required by conditions to this permission.**

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenities of the area, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2019), Core Strategy (2007) Policy CP4, Policy DM1 of Development Management Document (2015) and Design and Townscape Guide (2009).

- 04 The first floor north facing (rear) windows shall only be glazed in obscure glass (the glass to be obscure to at least Level 4 on the Pilkington Levels of Privacy, or such equivalent as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) and be permanently fixed shut, except for any top hung fan light which shall be a minimum of 1.7 metres above internal finished floor level of the room. In the case of multiple or double glazed units at least one layer of glass in the relevant units shall be glazed in obscure glass to at least Level 4.**

Reason: To protect the privacy and environment of people in neighbouring residential properties, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP2 and CP4, Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 and DM3 and Design and Townscape Guide (2009).

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework. The detailed analysis is set out in a report on the application prepared by officers.

Informatives

- 01 You are advised that as the proposed extension(s) to your property equates to less than 100sqm of new floorspace the development benefits from a Minor Development Exemption under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and as such no charge is payable. See www.southend.gov.uk/cil for further details about CIL.**
- 02 You should be aware that in cases where damage occurs during construction works to the highway in implementing this permission that Council may seek to recover the cost of repairing public highways and footpaths from any party responsible for damaging them. This includes damage carried out when implementing a planning permission or other works to buildings or land. Please take care when carrying out works on or near the public highways and footpaths in the borough.**