

Lee Virgin
14 Rowan Way
Witham, CM82LJ

13/09/20

Good Evening all

My name is Lee Virgin, the applicant for the extension on 14 Rowan Way, Witham.

I wish to clarify a few things associated with my application including the report on our property, item 5F, on page 63 of the Agenda, and Witham Town Council's comments regarding over development and design as per Policy RLP17.

Regarding over development - Our planning officer explained that although she does not agree, Witham council's issue is with the proposed rear extension. This extension would be filling 6.84m² of a 9.48m² void in our garden created from the original build. The void is a small three sided, concreted space located between our lounge and downstairs toilet walls, and fence. Due to it being enclosed, small and tucked around the corner, it's of such a style that sitting there is not desirable in comparison to the larger garden space in front of the lounge, it has therefore been used as a dumping ground for the last 14 years. Our previous neighbors at number 16, also discussed the wasted space of this area in their garden.

The proposed rear extension is small and if approved, the new garden space will be 56m². The garden will be landscaped with Italian Granite slabs and pebbles from the house edge to form a patio and as the extension is over 2.5m² smaller than the void we don't use, we would actually be gaining over 2m of usable external space from that area. I do a lot of walking and see other local houses with smaller gardens, where extensions have made a vast visual improvement to the existing property, one of them being 9 Oak Fall which Witham Council also objected. Likewise, our extension will improve the appearance of our property, allow us to gain some extra space both internally and externally, and enable us utilize an area of the garden that has been an eye sore for many years.

Regarding the front extension, we can fit 3 cars on our drive. The proposed is a small size and located in driveway space not used for parking so there will be no loss of spaces.

I'm unsure how filling these areas both front and back are considered over development rather than an improvement to a tricky space in the back and use of ample space in the front. I'm also concerned that when a number of houses look run down, as 9 Oak Fall did prior to its extension, the potential visual improvement to a property can be easily over looked.

Regarding the design - Both extensions are small, but enough to give us some extra space desperately required for our current living situation. We discussed the proposed rear extension with number 12. They are happy with the design and thankful we consulted them for their opinion and preferences. We opted for a roof style that would not overpower their garden space and a render finish as per their preference. This area is unseen by anyone else. Despite our needs due to our personal situation, we reduced the front extension to single story as requested by our planning

officer, copying the design used on numerous properties on the street and again opted for a render finish to improve on the existing rendered areas and give it a cleaner look.

Regarding report 5F in the agenda - the site history on page 64 lists a number of associated planning applications. These are not for this property. The only 2 relevant are those dated 27.05.05 & 30.03.06 (revised version) to add a bedroom, dining room and shower room. Please note, of these applications, the dining and shower room were not an extension but a conversion of the garage, and the bedroom was an extension above the existing flat roofed lounge. Therefore, the previous extension mentioned in the report was not a double story as suggested - we have never extended anywhere on this property other than above the original flat roofed lounge that protruded into the garden. It was that design of the original house that produced the left over space to the side of the lounge that we wish to extend, not any previously development carried out by myself and as such, I do not agree with Witham councils over development concerns, particularly as the area of their concern is a small extension in a badly designed, unused space, and the remaining garden including its useable area will be vastly improved.

I hope this clarifies any concerns.

Thank you for taking the time to discuss and consider this application.