



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 March 2021

by Euan FS Pearson BA(Hons) BTP FRGS MRICS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/B0230/D/21/3266744
54 Swasedale Road, Luton LU3 2UD

- 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 & Mrs Abrol against the decision of Luton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01090/FULHH, dated 4 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 November 2020.
 - The development proposed is "Erect loft conversion with rear dormer, hip to gable roof to include 5 front velux windows following approved scheme for erection of single storey front/side extensions with two storey side and front extension, and alteration from flat roof to hipped roof with alterations to front elevation including changes to fenestration detailing".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse, on the end of a row of four similar properties (Nos. 48 to 54), some of which have been extended at ground floor level. The appeal property occupies a prominent corner location on the junction with Ailsworth Road, with three elevations visible from the public realm.
4. I note that planning permission Ref 20/00103/FULHH has been granted to extend the appeal property to the front and side and change a section of flat roof to hipped. A west facing rooflight is shown in the approved hipped roof. I observed that development had commenced. It is further proposed to raise the ridge height by around 1.5m, alter/reorientate the roof to accommodate a third floor in the roof space including a box dormer across much of the new roof on the rear elevation, and install five rooflights on the front roof slope.
5. Raising the ridge and reorientating the roof would unbalance the appearance of the row, so much so as to constitute a detracting feature in the street scene, thus causing harm.

6. The rear of the appeal property is clearly visible from Ailsworth Road. The dormer roof is not flat, sloping down from, and therefore, not set down from the ridge. Set in about 1m from the edge of the roof, and less than 0.5m above the eaves, the dormer occupies the vast majority of the roof space. Therefore, I consider, that the scale, design and bulk of the roof alteration and dormer, cumulatively, is not diminutive and will have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the row.
7. Therefore, the proposal conflicts policies LLP1, LLP19 and LLP25 of the Luton Local Plan 2011-2031 (2017). Among other things, these require a high standard of design, including extensions that are proportionate to the original building, that respect local context and maintain or improve the appearance and character of the area. Similarly, creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

Other Matters

8. The appellant states that there are different roof designs in the area and properties with loft conversions. The appellant's photographs show changes made at No. 2 Ailsworth Road, but little information about this or other local loft conversions has been provided. In any event, individual applications are considered on merit, in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, this does not change my conclusions on the specific harm I have identified arising from the appeal proposal.
9. An interested party has raised issues of design, appearance, and off-road car parking. The proposed development retains an integral garage and I am satisfied that the appeal site provides adequate parking space for the occupants of this size of family dwelling. I have dealt with the other issues above.

Conclusion

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

Euan FS Pearson

INSPECTOR