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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2021

**by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 12 October 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/D/21/3273000**

**19 Valence Circus, Dagenham, London, RM8 3LU**

- 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 Robert Goraj against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
  - The application Ref 20/02541/HSE, dated 22 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 February 2021.
  - The development proposed is described as a 'loft conversion including raising ridge by 300mm, hip to gable conversion and rear dormer'.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Reasons

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area. The development plan includes policies CP2 and CP3 in the Council's Core Strategy (2010) (CS) and BP2, BP8 and BP11 in its Borough Wide Development Plan Policies DPD (2011). It also includes policy D4 in the Published London Plan 2021 (LP) which is unchanged from the Intend to Publish version referred to in the Council's decision and has replaced the policies in the 2016 London Plan referred to in its decision. Together these seek to ensure that development delivers high-quality design that respects the local context and preserves or enhances non-designated heritage assets.
3. The appeal site lies within the Becontree Estate, a non-designated heritage asset referred to in the Council's policies. The estate has historic significance having been built as Homes fit for Heroes in the interwar period and at the time was the largest municipal estate in the world. Whilst there have been some changes, its architectural significance lies in its cottage estate design which remains evident with symmetrical arrangements of semi-detached and terraced houses of a consistent scale and design, resulting in a balanced and uniform street scene. The appeal site comprises an end terrace house in a terrace of similar properties, located on Valence Circus which is unique in its 360° circular street layout with the long terraces contributing to its uniform character.
4. The proposed development would alter the existing hipped roof to a gabled roof, raising its ridge height, with rooflights on the front elevation and a large flat roof dormer on the rear elevation. A similar scheme was recently deemed lawful by the Council as permitted development under application

20/02536/CLUP but that did not include the raising of the ridge height. I have noted that the appellant intends to construct that scheme if this appeal is dismissed.

5. Although a chimney would separate the raised ridge from that of the adjoining house, the difference in ridge height would be clearly seen from the street and would be emphasised by the length of the ridge. It would disrupt the consistent ridge height of the terrace and would distract from its uniform character.
6. I have noted that the current proposal includes the set back of the dormer from the lower edge of the roof and that it is set down from the ridge. However, these changes are slight and would not overcome the harm that would be caused by the raised height of the dormer, particularly as there are no other rear dormers in this terrace. The proposal also incorporates barge boards on the gable end which is an improvement on the permitted development scheme. However, as those are on the part of the gable end furthest from the street, they would not be particularly noticeable and this small benefit would not outweigh the harm caused by the raising of the ridge.
7. Whilst the conversion of the hipped roof to a gabled roof is permitted development, it would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the terrace by reason of its uncharacteristic form and additional bulk. The harm caused by the raising of the ridge would draw further attention to, and would add to the harm caused by, the proposed gabled roof.
8. I have noted the other examples of raised ridge heights in the surrounding area referred to by the appellant. Whilst I have not been made aware of their planning history and whether or not they have permission or are permitted development, those examples are not common and are not characteristic of the area. I am not persuaded, therefore, that they set a precedent for this proposal.
9. I have noted that the appellant seeks to create an additional bedroom for his family and that the proposal would also increase the head room available in the loft conversion but that does not outweigh the significant harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.

### **Conclusion**

10. For the reasons stated above, I conclude that the proposed development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area, contrary to the development plan policies referred to earlier and there are no material considerations that would indicate otherwise. The appeal is dismissed.

*Sarah Colebourne*

Inspector