The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2022

by Terrence Kemmann-Lane JP DipTP FRTPI MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 JANUARY 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/21/3284810
54 Faircross Avenue, Romford, RM5 3UD

- 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 D Leone against the decision of the London Borough of Havering.
- The application Ref P1054.21, dated 31 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 29 July 2021.
- The development proposed is conversion of roof space to habitable use involving conversion of roof from hip to gable end and to include 2 front roof lights.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The Local Planning Authority changed the description of the proposed development which was shown on the application as proposed raised gable, alterations, rear dormer window and rooms in roofspace. The appellant has no objection to the appeal proceeding on the basis of the altered description which more accurately describes the proposal.

Main Issue

3. There is a single issue in this case: the effect of the roof extension and rear dormer window on the form of the host property and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is part of a pair of semi-detached houses in an area of mainly semi-detached and terraced properties. A very common feature in the area is the hipped roof form. Where there is a predominance of semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs in their original form, it can be the case that where 1 dwelling has been altered by changing the roof into the gable form, the symmetry is affected. The lack of balance in the pair can be disconcerting to the eye, so that there is an unfortunate effect on the character of the pair and its neighbours.

5. In the case of the appeal property, the attached house, at No. 52 Faircross Avenue, has its original hip, but the appeal property has been extended to the side with a hip under a lower ridgeline. To my eye, the continued presence of

the hipped form does not standout as being incongruous to the pair. This is because the extension is set back from the original front elevation which, together with the lower ridgeline, means that the change is comprehendible and does not look at odds, since the hipped form is retained.

6. A similar effect is achieved in the appeal proposal, in as much as the hipped end of the roof is preserved, with its apex being a little below the existing ridge. The difference is that the original roof of the house is proposed to be extended so that it becomes a gable, save that it barely has the appearance of a gable because almost all of it is behind the hip of the extension.

7. I consider that this form is little different in the streetscene to that which exists at present. It would not have the unbalancing effect on the pair any more than the present extension. As such I consider that it is acceptable in terms of the minor effect it would have on the semidetached pair, and would not be unduly detrimental to their character.

8. However, turning to the proposed rear dormer, this would stretch cross almost all of the roof, as extended by the new gable end. As such it would be a major element in the rear elevation of the house. Because the appeal dwelling is situated at the junction of Faircross Avenue and Bartlow Gardens, the dormer would be seen from the public realm as an intrusive element in the composition of the semi-detached pair. Being so unsympathetic to the present elements and massing of the pair, I consider that it would have a harmful effect on the appearance and character of the house, and the streetscene when viewed from Bartlow Gardens.

9. My attention has been drawn to the fact that permission was given on 11 September 2020 for a scheme that provides a new dwelling attached to the appeal property. This, it appears from the plans that have been provided to me, involves the demolition of the existing 2 storey extension. I note that the original plans for this new dwelling included a rear dormer, albeit a little less conspicuous than the one in the current appeal proposal. This dormer was removed in a revision to the scheme, as permitted.

10. In my judgement the benefits of the scheme to the occupiers of the appeal dwelling are outweighed by the unfortunate and intrusive appearance of the proposed rear dormer on the form of the host property and the character and appearance of the surrounding area. For that reason I have decided that the appeal should be dismissed.

Terrence Kemmann-Lane

INSPECTOR