

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 June 2022

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 July 2022

Appeal Reference: APP/H1515/D/22/3294234

1 Linden Rise, Warley CM14 5UB

- 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 S Attwood against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application (reference 21/01849/HHA, dated 2 November 2021) was refused by notice dated 24 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as follows: "Rotate and raise ridge line; Rear box dormer; Front aspect rooflights".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located in a residential area of Warley which lies to the south of the main part of Brentwood. Although the area has been laid out using traditional forms and materials, the development of which the existing house forms part is rather modern in character and has evidently been the result of a careful design process. The pattern of development has avoided regimentation and different forms and materials have been used to create interest and variety in the streetscene, notwithstanding the appearance of higher density. In the wider urban context, however, this tightness of development is offset by the larger open space at Woodman Road Cemetery, which adjoins the appeal site to the east.
4. The existing house at number 1 Linden Rise has a gable facing the roadside, as do some others in the development. This generates variety in the appearance of the overall scheme, since most houses have side gables, in a more conventional format. Both at the front and the rear, however, the complex and varied roof forms of the houses (including subsidiary roofs of garages, for example) add to the townscape qualities of the development. It can be observed that the flank elevation of number 1 Linden Rise is an important

- element in the streetscene, as it is approached from the north, even though the gable feature presented to the road is awkward in some respects.
5. It is now proposed to alter the main roof form, to create a new structure spanning from front to back of the house, rather than from side to side as at present. Added to this, a large box dormer on the rear slope of the new roof would create space for additional accommodation at second floor level, to be lit by the new dormer and by rooflights on the new front slope.
 6. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (which was revised in July 2021) emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. New development ought to be sympathetic to local character and history, although it is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities. Nevertheless, the aim of achieving good design standards generally includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation in new dwellings.
 7. Development Plan Policies share the principles that are set out in the 'National Planning Policy Framework'. In particular, Policy CP1 of the 'Brentwood Replacement Local Plan' (adopted in 2005), sets out broad development control criteria, including a requirement for new development to respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Policy H17 of the 'Brentwood Replacement Local Plan' introduces a specific policy that is intended to control dormer windows that are out of scale or poorly related in design terms to the roofs upon which they are constructed.
 8. In this case, the proposed reconfiguration of the principal roof form would not necessarily be out of keeping with the surroundings. The new gable, facing those approaching from the north would be a larger element in the streetscene than the existing roof but it would reflect other forms in the area and it would not be unduly incongruous or overbearing.
 9. On the other hand, the new dormer would have a seriously harmful effect on the appearance of the surroundings. The new gabled side elevation of the house would be very obvious in views along the street and the box-shaped dormer would be an intrusive element in the design. It would contrast sharply with the remainder of the roofscape, which is dominated by a pattern of pitched roofs, and the dormer structure would clash with the architectural language of both the host building itself and others nearby. Thus, it would undermine the design integrity of the surroundings and harm the character and appearance of the area. The dormer would be an incongruous design feature and it would create a top heavy design for the building as a whole.
 10. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and an extension to the building need not be ruled out in principle. Nevertheless, I am convinced that, in this case, the harm that would be done to the streetscene, and to the character and appearance of the surroundings more generally, clearly outweigh the benefits of the project. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with both national and local planning policies (including the Development Plan) and that it ought not to be allowed. Although I have

considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR