



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2022 by A Humphries BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Chris Preston BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H1515/D/22/3300874

56 Westwood Avenue, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4NU

- 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 Taylor against the decision of Brentwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00184/HHA, dated 2 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable extension, rear dormer, roof windows and fenestration.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a hip to gable extension, rear dormer, roof windows and fenestration at 56 Westwood Avenue, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4NU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/00184/HHA, dated 2 February 2022, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans: Site Plan (ref. D010); Proposed Block Plan (ref. D011); Proposed Plans (refs. D012 and D013); and Proposed Elevations (ref. D014).

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The host dwelling is a two-storey semi-detached property within a residential area characterised by semi-detached dwellings. The architectural style and roofscape of the dwellings within the immediate locality vary considerably. Many of the dwellings on the street have been subject to alterations and extensions, including hip to gable roof extensions and rear dormers. Thus, the original symmetry of semi-detached dwellings within the vicinity has been greatly eroded, to an extent where variety of roof form, as opposed to consistency, is now the prevailing characteristic. The host dwelling has been previously extended to the side. In addition, a hip to gable conversion and large rear dormer are under construction on the neighbouring attached property, such that there is no symmetry in roof form between the pair.
5. The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and the National Design Guide seek high quality design that is sympathetic and integrated into the surrounding built environment. I acknowledge that the proposed rear dormer, which because of its scale, would increase bulk and massing of the host dwelling. However, rear dormers are a common feature of the street scene and form part of the character of the area. From observations during the site visit, many rear dormers appear as dominant features and are not setback from the ridge and edges of the roofs to any significant degree. This includes the rear dormer on the adjoining semi-detached dwelling, which I find comparable to the scale and bulk of the proposed rear dormer. Similarly, the proposed hip to gable extension would add to the bulk of the host dwelling. As gable ends are now a relatively common feature on the street scene, the proposed hip to gable extension would reflect the style of dwellings on the street, including the adjoining semi-detached dwelling.
6. Whilst the bulk and appearance of the host dwelling would change significantly as a result of the proposed rear dormer and hip to gable extension, the proposed development would relate to the surrounding built environment and be in keeping with common features of dwellings on the street that contribute to the character of the area. I am therefore not persuaded that the proposed development would be incongruous to the character and appearance of the area.
7. For the reasons above, the development would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed development would therefore accord with Policy BE14 of the Brentwood Local Plan 2016-2033 (2022). This policy seeks high design standards that respond positively and sympathetically to their context. The proposed development also accords with the principles of the National Design Guide and Framework (2021).

Conditions

8. In addition to the standard conditions requiring a time limit for commencement of development and adherence to the approved plans, a condition requiring the use of external materials to match the existing building is considered necessary and reasonable. This is in the interests of preserving the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

9. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

A Humphries

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

10. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and, on that basis, I agree with the recommendation and shall allow the appeal, subject to the conditions set out above.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR