



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2023

by A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/23/3324666

146 Roding Lane North, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8LJ

- 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 Ashish Rathore against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge.
The application Ref: 0429/23 dated 10 February 2023 was refused by notice dated 11 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is Loft conversion with a front dormer and three rear rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for Loft conversion with a front dormer and three rear rooflights at 146 Roding Lane North, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8LJ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: 0429/23 dated 10 February 2023 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 146/RLN/L/17; 146/RLN/L/18; 146/RLN/L/19; 146/RLN/L/20.
 - 3) All external materials used in the development hereby approved, including doors and windows shall in colour material and texture match those found in the existing building.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. 146 Roding Lane North (No.146) is a modestly-sized semi-detached bungalow sitting within a densely developed residential street frontage and undergoing works other than those addressed by this appeal at the time of my site visit. The development pattern and housing typologies varies at different points in the road, but No.146 sits within a small group of similar bungalows which are raised slightly above road level, and on the opposite side of the road, a range of semi-detached houses which appear to date from a similar period around the middle

of the twentieth Century. These are set slightly lower than the road level. The street character is that of a relatively busy suburban street dominated by strong frontage alignment on either side and private cars which are, on the whole, parked on the house frontages.

4. The Council's reason for refusal relates to the impact of the dormer proposed to be inserted in the front roof slope, referring to what is proposed as an 'egregious addition' having 'negative correspondence with the prevailing pattern of development'. The officer report lays some emphasis on the issue of loss of symmetry but my observations concur with what is reported in the officer report which acknowledges that five of the small group of similar dwellings within which No.146 sits have broadly similar examples of dormer insertions and not all of those are symmetrically located. What is proposed could not be fairly described as 'conspicuously bad or wrong; blatant, flagrant' which is the usual meaning of the term employed in the refusal reason. Given that the officer report acknowledges that 5 of the 7 bungalows numbered 132-146, (the latter being the appeal site) already have front roof dormers inserted it is scarcely arguable that the proposal would be in conflict with the 'prevailing pattern of development' as it is currently found.
5. The principles for extensions set out in Policy LP30 and to promote high quality design in Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015-2030 (RLP) are consistent with those found elsewhere in that there is always a balance to be achieved between the seeking protect the quality and amenity of the built environment whilst allowing (dwellings particularly) to be adapted to needs and change in appropriate and considered ways. The criteria to be applied will be a matter for professional judgement in terms of weight and importance, varying according to context and the circumstances of each case. In that regard, symmetry is not, of itself, a design objective that merits more than nominal weight in this matter and the notion of subordination (of extensions) which seeks to protect an established pattern of development is well applied here. The dormer is plainly subordinate to the overall form of the roof. The Council report no other concerns.
6. Consequently, and taking all matters raised into account, as my reasoning indicates, the proposal would not conflict with policies LP26 and LP30 of the RLP nor, therefore, with the development plan taken as a whole. On that basis the appeal succeeds subject to appropriate conditions. In addition to the usual plans and timing conditions to ensure the proposed dormer is not unduly prominent in the street scene a condition to ensure the exterior materials used are sympathetic to what currently exists would be appropriate.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR