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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 March 2025

by **Martin Andrews MA(Planning) Bsc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 1 April 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/25/3360904**

**7 Fairlawn Drive, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1NR**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Callin against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
  - The application Ref. is DM/24/2478.
  - The development proposed is an attic conversion including a new dormer and an extension to the roof to form 1 No. bedroom and a home working space. Ridge height and eaves height to remain as existing.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the roof extensions on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Fairlawn Drive street scene.

### Reasons

3. The appeal scheme seeks to provide increased living space within the roof through a combination of a rear dormer and a side hip to gable extension. In respect of the proposed dormer the Council argues that this would be excessively wide for the existing roof plane and have a boxed appearance.
4. However the dormer would be slightly lower than the ridge and significantly set up from the eaves. The windows would be of a matching design to those of the existing rear and appropriately spaced to break up the dormer face. Furthermore, the roof of No. 5 next door has a similarly sized dormer and the roof addition cannot be seen from the street scene or any other part of the public realm.
5. The Officer's Report points out that the dormers at No. 5 and indeed those at No. 9 (with pitched roofs) were assessed under a different development plan and prior to the adoption of the Mid Sussex Design Guide ('the SPD'). Nonetheless, they are now part and parcel of the rearward context for the appeal scheme and in my view carry significant weight in the appraisal of those now proposed at No. 7. On balance I consider the dormer to be acceptable, notwithstanding an element of conflict with the Council's SPD.
6. Turning to the proposed hip to gable, I acknowledge that this is needed to combine with the dormer to achieve the required additional living space in the roof. However, the continuation of the ridge and the gable end would result in a significant alteration to the roof form. This would both unbalance the dwelling given the hipped

roof on the other side and reduce the openness between it and No. 9, especially as both houses are already tight to the shared boundary.

7. The grounds of appeal are only able to refer to one hip to gable extension in Fairlawn Drive, at No. 56, which suggests that they are otherwise absent from Fairlawn Drive. That extension is seen from the road as being next to the hipped roof of a neighbouring property, as would be the case here. And in my view it serves only to demonstrate the harm caused to the character and appearance of the original property and its disruptive effect to the street scene. The other examples shown are similarly obtrusive and I consider that hip to gable additions are only normally acceptable when they create balance as opposed to imbalance or at a corner where they may signal a turning point and a change to the character and appearance of the locality. And even in those circumstances they require careful scrutiny.
8. Overall, and notwithstanding my acceptance of the proposed dormer, I consider that the proposal would be in harmful conflict with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018; Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan 2016; Principle DG52 of the SPD and with Government policy in paragraph 135 a), b) & c) of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024.
9. The appeal therefore fails.

*Martin Andrews*

INSPECTOR