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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 April 2025

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 13 May 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X1735/D/25/3359205**

**28 Gladys Avenue, Cowplain, Waterlooville PO8 8HT**

- 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 Billy McLachlan against the decision of Havant Borough Council.
  - The application Ref. is APP/24/00773.
  - The development proposed is a hip to gable loft conversion with a rear facing dormer.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the streetscene of Gladys Avenue.

### Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal dwelling is one half of a pair of semi-detached houses with No. 26. Nos. 28 & 26 are one of a row of four such pairs on this side of the road and at each end of the row is a bungalow. The appeal dwelling No. 28 already has a two storey hipped roof side extension with the front wall set back and the ridge stepped down to achieve an appearance of subservience as required in the Council's guidance for house extensions in the Havant Borough Design Guide SPD ('the SPD'). No. 26 also has a less recent two storey side extension but with a continuous ridge level and a flush front wall.
4. The effect of these and other alterations has been a loss of the pair's original symmetry but this does not particularly draw the eye, especially as the other three pairs in the row no longer have symmetrical frontages. However, what is noticeable is that as a result of two storey side extensions to both Nos. 26 and 28, the combined built form appears as overly dominant in the street scene and from the rear gardens, the latter being clearly illustrated in Figure 2 of the grounds of appeal.
5. The existing building footprint occupies the full width of both plots and this is in marked contrast to the other pairs in the row, which for the most part have retained driveway widths between their flank elevations and side boundaries. I consider that the proposed hip to gable addition to No. 28 would harmfully add yet more mass and bulk to the already extended roof. In public views from the road, the raised ridge and side gable would be a jarring feature when read with the hipped roof of the neighbouring No. 30 and have a similar adverse impact by further unbalancing the appearance of the pair with No. 26 and its existing, albeit extended, hipped

- roof. The adverse effect on the Gladys Avenue street scene from the inconsistency of appearance within the originally matching row of houses would be exacerbated.
6. Apart from this effect on the street scene, the hip to gable would combine with the oversized dormer on the rear roof slope to result in a dwelling with little or no design merit and entirely contrary to the SPD. This design guidance is very similar to that of other Local Planning Authorities in resisting this type of roof extension when, as is the case here, it appears as an ungainly and incongruous extension. In essence, the appeal scheme fails to achieve an appropriate balance between on the one hand a householder's understandable aspiration for increased living space and on the other the consequences of the alterations and additions for the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings.
  7. The grounds of appeal refer extensively to the locality comprising '*a prevalence of large dormer windows and roof conversions; many examples of obscure, improvised and unbalanced roof forms, and dwellings sometimes with significant massing in relation to their neighbours*' with supporting photographs. It is argued that these are not harmful; that over time the area has become diverse in its character and appearance, and that the appeal proposal would be entirely in keeping with this evolution.
  8. I acknowledge that there are a variety of house designs and roof forms in the area but I do not accept that no harm has been caused – indeed in a couple of the appeal statement's photographs I consider the harm to be egregious. Nor do I take the view that the decision-making process, be it at Local Planning Authority or Inspectorate level should seek to emulate poor outcomes from decisions on earlier applications or from permitted development. Policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011, the Council's SPD and Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework revised December 2024 are all in place to ensure that future development is of a high design standard and makes a positive contribution to its setting.
  9. The appeal scheme clearly fails to meet these objectives and the proposed roof alterations are not an example of the 'quirky' development (paragraph 2.6 of the statement refers) which I agree can occasionally add interest and variety to the vernacular of an area because of its innovative and contrasting design.
  10. For these reasons the appeal is dismissed.

*Martin Andrews*

INSPECTOR