

Design and Access Statement

Proposal for a Two-Storey House and Extensions at 54, Faircross Avenue, Collier Row, Romford, Essex, RM5 3UD

1.0 The Site and Local Context

1.1 The site lies within the urban area boundary of Havering Borough wherein the proposed development is acceptable in principle. It is not subject to any specific local area policy or land-use designation or statutory protective designation.

1.2 The existing property is a three/four bedroom semi-detached house. It is situated within a residential built-frontage of similar properties.

1.3 The site is a corner plot formed at the junction of Bartlow Gardens with Faircross Avenue. Where it addresses Bartlow Gardens the boundary is marked by a length of 2.0 metre high close-boarded fencing.

2.0 The Proposal

2.1 Construction of a two-storey, three bedroom house attached to the side elevation of the existing house. An existing two-storey side extension would be removed. First-floor rear extension and rear box dormer extensions are proposed to the existing house. The latter would enable conversion of the roof-space to habitable accommodation. The enlarged property would have four bedrooms.

3.0 Relevant Planning Policy

National Level: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

3.1 At paragraph 7 of the NPPF it states that: ***"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development."*** It goes on at paragraph 10 to state that there should be a ***"...presumption in favour of sustainable development."*** It then states at paragraph 38 it that: ***"Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."*** At paragraph 68 it then states that:

“Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should (amongst other things):

Support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.”

3.2 The NPPF does not directly address matters of dwelling design or residential amenity but at section 12 it does set out some very general, common-sense principles providing basic direction to achieving good design outcomes.

3.3 With regard to parking, the NPPF does not dictate minimum or maximum parking standards. It takes a more flexible and responsive approach in effectively directing at paragraph 105 that if provision be required at all, it be determined on a site-by-site basis taking into account a range of factors that will vary according to any given situation.

Local Level: The Havering Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document 2008

4.1 The following local area policies are those most relevant to consideration of the planning merits of the proposed development and have been acknowledged for appropriate compliance in its conception:

CP1: *'Housing Supply'*

CP2: *'Sustainable Communities'*

CP17: *'Design'*

CP9: *'Reducing the Need to Travel'*

DC2: *'Housing Mix and Density'*

DC3: *'Housing Design and Layout'*

DC7: *'Lifetime Homes and Mobility Housing'*

DC33: *'Car Parking'*

DC34: *'Walking'*

DC35: 'Cycling'

DC40: 'Waste Recycling'

DC51: 'Water Supply, Drainage and Quality'

DC61: 'Urban Design'

4.2 Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) '*Design for Living-Residential Design*', '*Residential Extensions and Alterations*', '*Landscaping*' and '*Sustainable Design and Construction*' are also used by the Council to inform the appropriate application of policies.

5.0 Design

5.1 The conception of the proposed development has been guided by three principle aims:

- Improvement of the local housing stock both in quantity and quality.
- Making the best use of urban land by raising density in manner appropriate to and respectful of the local development pattern and design context.
- Respect for the amenity of neighbouring residential property occupiers.

5.2 The immediate built-frontage of Faircross Avenue within which the proposed house would stand is comprised mainly of short terraced rows with occasional but rare semi-detached pairs and all being in the same inter-war architectural style. The proposed house would represent the most obvious, natural and visually agreeable addition to the existing semi-detached pair and would effectively convert this block into a short terrace of three. This would be compatible with the predominant block type of the area. Architectural details and materials would pick up those of the existing house and other houses in the area thereby ensuring harmonious assimilation into the street-scene.

5.3 The first-floor rear extension and box-dormer would be appropriate responses to the form of the existing and proposed dwellings. Box-dormers are accepted as valid architectural features and are common-place in rear roof slopes often due to their allowance as Permitted Development not requiring specific

grant of planning permission. The existence of this concession is recognition that box-dormers are essentially acceptable and especially so if they would be set well below the ridge-line, well up from the eaves line and well in from the roof edge(s) (verge). The proposed box-dormer would meet these three requirements and as such would not be a dominating presence in the slope of the roof.

5.4 In terms of the actual space that the proposed house would occupy, this is not a fundamentally important spatial component of the built-frontage. It is simply part of a wider than average residential plot in an otherwise quite tightly developed street-scene. It is not a notable visual punctuation gap between houses that needs to be preserved for its own sake.

5.5 Careful siting of the proposed house in relation to neighbouring residential properties would ensure no prejudicial impact on the amenities of their occupiers by over-bearing physical presence, material reduction in ambient daylight or over-looking and loss of privacy. The proposed new house would be similarly immune from adverse effects by existing properties.

5.6 The site frontage is already hard surfaced and this would remain to be divided between the existing house (two off-street parking spaces) and proposed house (not as parking). A new hard surfaced driveway for parking purposes, with new dropped kerb vehicular access from Bartlow Gardens, would be created at the rear of the plot to serve the proposed house. This new hard surfacing would be porous in nature and aesthetically appropriate to the locality.

5.7 Private amenity space would be provided for both the proposed and existing houses (areas of 110 m² and 104m² respectively. See block plan) in a manner commensurate with the size and shape of private amenity space serving other houses in Faircross Avenue generally. These private amenity spaces would be in a highly useable, regular shapes with un-overlooked private sitting out areas close to the rear elevation of each dwelling. For both properties this provision would meet the 'quality' and 'usability' expectations of the adopted 'Residential Design'

SPD (fixed size standards do not apply under this guidance) which the Council uses to support relevant local planning policy.

5.8 For both the proposed and existing houses, waste/recycling bins would be storable within the boundaries of each property and out of conspicuous public view. Other small recycling receptacles would be capable of being kept within the proposed and existing dwellings.

5.9 The proposed dwelling and extensions to the existing have been positively designed to accord with the strategic, aesthetic, character, functionality, protection and sustainability expectations of the adopted policies and SPD listed at paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 respectively.

6.0 Access

6.1 The site is within the urban area of Havering Borough where a comprehensive range of facilities and amenities is available to the local population in Collier Row itself and in Romford town-centre. The application site is within walking and cycling distance of local amenities at Moray Way and Gobions Avenue. There is also a well serviced bus-route on Havering Road giving frequent access to Romford town-centre with its main-line railway station, providing public-transport into London. Occupiers of the proposed house would therefore have the ability to access a full range of facilities and services, including educational, cultural, community, shopping, and employment opportunities, without over-reliance on the private motor car. This would accord with the objectives of national policy and those local area policies concerned with making development as sustainable as possible.

6.2 The site would provide two off-street parking spaces for the proposed house whilst the existing house would have two off-street parking spaces on its existing hard surfaced frontage and several more already existing at the bottom end of the site. Given the predominantly terraced nature of housing in the locality this would accord with the expectations of annex 5 of the Core Strategy (and the

matrix in policy DC2). Compliance with the spirit and purpose of policy DC33 would be achieved.

6.3 Space for parking several Powered Two-Wheelers and provision for secure cycle storage can be made within the site boundaries of both proposed and existing properties. The expectations of annexes 5 and 6 of the Core Strategy would be met.

6.4 The proposed development would be constructed in compliance with the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations to allow reasonable access and use to all persons, regardless of disability, age or gender.

7.0 Trees

7.1 No trees or vegetation of high public amenity value would be lost from the site as a consequence of the proposed development, either in immediate terms or in terms of damage causing premature terminal decline over a longer period of time.

8.0 Biodiversity

8.1 There are no species of protected flora and fauna known or suspected to exist on the site. The proposed dwelling would occupy an area of hard-surfacing which does not provide important wildlife habitat. The increased amount of development on the overall site by comparison with the existing would not cause a material intensification in the use of the site that would threaten the quality of such wildlife habitat as would be available in the remaining garden space.

9.0 Statement of Community Involvement

9.1 The proposed development is of a relatively minor nature and would have no appreciable environmental effects on, or implications for, the wider local community. The occupiers of immediately neighbouring properties have been considered in the design and siting of the proposed house with the objective being to ensure that their residential amenities would not be affected to a material and harmful degree. No consultation with neighbours has taken place in

the knowledge that all adjoining property owners/occupiers will be directly consulted for their views by the Council as part of the planning application process.

10.0 Flood Risk Assessment

10.1 The application site lies within Environment Agency designated Flood Risk Zone 1 where little, if any, risk of flooding has been identified. No special protection or amelioration measures are necessary.

11.0 Conclusion

11.1 The proposed development would comply with the objectives the NPPF and of all directly relevant local area policies and no interests of acknowledged importance would be harmed by it. A grant of planning permission is appropriate and the Council is at liberty to impose any conditions it deems reasonable and necessary to ensure satisfactory initial development and satisfactory on-going functional use of the site.