



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2025

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 August 2025.

Appeal Ref: 6000296

10 Helen Road, Hornchurch, RM11 2EW

- 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 Paul Demitriou against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref is P1490.24.
 - The development proposed is retrospective application for a loft conversion to create first floor with two side dormers; single-storey rear extension; alterations to fenestration including installation of additional ground floor window on East side elevation; and front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion to create first floor with two side dormers; single-storey rear extension; alterations to fenestration including installation of additional ground floor window on East side elevation; and front porch at 10 Helen Road, Hornchurch RM11 2EW in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P1490.24, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos: 10.14C; 10.15B.
 - 2) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows/dormer windows shall be constructed on the flank elevations other than those expressly authorised by this permission.
 - 3) The windows within the side elevations of the dormers shall be permanently glazed with obscure glass to a minimum of level 4 on the standard scale of obscurity and retained as such.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development has been taken from the Council's decision notice as it more accurately reflects the proposal. However, the term "retrospective" has been omitted from the decision as it does not describe an act of development.
3. As the application was made retrospectively, I was able to assess the development as built and have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

4. The appeal scheme comprises several elements. However, the Council's objections relate solely to the roof alterations. The other elements are not contested, and I agree that they are acceptable.
5. Therefore, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the roof alterations on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

6. Planning permission (Ref: P0326.22) was previously granted for a loft conversion with dormers at the appeal property. However, the works were not implemented in accordance with the approved plans. The current proposal seeks to regularise the changes made, which include an increase in roof height, enlarged dormers, and modified fenestration.
7. Helen Road is a short residential cul-de-sac comprising bungalows with gable ends facing the street. While originally uniform, the character of the street has evolved, with several properties featuring roof alterations, including box dormers of varying sizes and positions. Notably, the adjacent property at No 8 has also had its roof raised and stands taller than the appeal property, partially screening it from wider views along the street.
8. The dormers in the appeal scheme are set down from the ridge and away from the roof edges, in accordance with the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (2011). The triangular windows, while differing from the original fenestration, are modest in scale and follow the profile of the dormer cheeks. Their visibility in the street scene is limited, and they do not appear discordant within the context of the modernised bungalow.
9. Overall, the increase in ridge height and dormer size is modest when assessed against the previously approved scheme and does not result in a significant departure from the established character of the area. The development integrates acceptably into the evolving streetscape and does not appear unduly dominant or incongruous.
10. I therefore conclude that the roof alterations, as built, do not result in material harm to the character or appearance of the area. The proposal complies with Policy 26 of the Havering Local Plan (2021) and Policy D4 of the London Plan (2021), which seek high quality design that respects local context and character.

Other Matters

11. The retrospective nature of the development does not, in itself, justify refusal. Planning decisions must be based on the merits of the development as built.
12. Concerns raised regarding potential damage to drains fall outside the scope of this appeal. No substantive evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the development has caused drainage capacity issues that would justify refusal.

Conditions

13. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions against the tests set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

14. As the development is already complete, the standard time limit condition is unnecessary. The approved plans condition is imposed to ensure certainty and enforceability. Conditions requiring obscure glazing and restricting new openings are necessary to safeguard the privacy of neighbouring occupiers.
15. However, insufficient planning justification has been provided to remove permitted development rights for porches and to restrict use of the roof of the rear extension, so the suggested conditions have not been imposed.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be allowed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR