V I S I O N A R Y P L A N N I N G U K

Chartered Town Planning Consultants

HOUSEHOLDER PLANNING STATEMENT

In support of a Householder Planning Application

40 Hall Lane, Upminster, RM14 1AF

Roof reconfiguration and raising of the ridge by 600mm; formation of a modest crown roof with Dutch-barn ends and chamfered corners; three subordinate pitched rear dormers and rooflights; and reconfiguration of the second floor so Bedroom 5, the dressing room and the en-suite have Building Regulations-compliant headroom.



Existing street frontage of 40 Hall Lane

Applicant	Mr & Mrs S Barron
Occupiers	Applicants
Agent (architecture)	Architectural Hub Ltd (Malcolm Clarke RIBA)
Planning consultant	Helen Morris Ruffle MA MRTPI, Visionary Planning UK
Local planning authority	London Borough of Havering
Application type	Householder planning application
Pre-application reference	W0170.26 (meeting 3 July 2026)
Drawings submitted	Architectural Hub series AHUB_2602007, original scheme (Rev PP01)
Accompanying documents	Design and Access Statement (Architectural Hub); this Planning Statement; site photographs
Report date	October 2026

1. Site Information and Constraints

Site address	40 Hall Lane, Upminster, Essex RM14 1AF
Ward	Upminster
Description of development	Householder roof alteration and second-floor reconfiguration
Pathway	Householder planning application
Flood risk zone	Flood Zone 1
Contaminated land	None known
Tree Preservation Order	No TPO recorded on the dwelling; street trees to the Hall Lane frontage to be protected to BS 5837
Heritage assets	Not listed. Not within a Conservation Area.
Green Belt	No
Hall Lane Policy Area	Yes. Zone A (frontage properties between the railway and Ashburnham Gardens / No. 42)
Article 4 Direction	None relevant to roof alterations
PTAL / connectivity	Suburban location immediately north of Upminster Station (District Line, London Overground and c2c)

1.1 The site

40 Hall Lane is a substantial two-storey detached family dwelling with existing second-floor accommodation in the roof. It sits on a deep, well landscaped plot on the eastern side of Hall Lane. The frontage is defined by a brick wall, railings, a paved driveway and two mature front-garden trees. The existing elevation presents paired Dutch-barn gables, bay windows, mock-Tudor framing and a tiled roof already punctuated by front rooflights. That composition is characteristic of the inter-war and later-altered houses along this stretch of Hall Lane.

The plot is long and rectangular, running east from Hall Lane. Neighbouring dwellings sit close on either flank (No. 42 to the north and No. 38 to the south). The facing flank elevations of both neighbours contain no habitable-room windows serving principal living rooms or bedrooms at the relevant levels. That point is annotated on the submitted plans by reference to approved floor plans at No. 42 (P0697.23) and the predicted window positions at No. 38. A generous, landscaped rear garden and a detached outbuilding lie to the east and are unaffected.

As the accompanying Design and Access Statement records, Hall Lane is an important local route connecting surrounding residential streets with Upminster town centre, schools and Upminster Station. The streetscape is defined by mature landscaping, established front gardens and varied architectural styles, ranging from traditional suburban housing to later alterations and additions. The application property sits comfortably within that grain.



Aerial context: Hall Lane and Ashburnham Gardens. The application site is marked. The roofscape is mixed: hips, gables, crowns, Dutch barns and large rear roof additions are all visible within a short walk of the site.

1.3 Character of Hall Lane: there is no single roof vernacular

The Hall Lane Policy Area (HLPA) SPD 2009 is explicit about what generates the area's special character. It is not a uniform roof typology. Paragraphs 4.1 and the Zone A commentary describe established large detached and semi-detached dwellings, generally well maintained and set in large gardens, having the amenity of considerable tree and shrub planting. Local Plan paragraph 7.8.7 repeats the same analysis: the area's character derives primarily from the long and well landscaped rear gardens whose size and good tree cover create unusual spaciousness which is extensive and uninterrupted.

That is the special character the development plan and the SPD exist to protect. It is plot size, landscape, spacing and the avoidance of harmful subdivision, not a freeze on roof form. Zone A of the SPD even contemplates further frontage flatted development, provided generous rear amenity space is retained. The SPD's only direct comment on householder works is sympathetic: where planning permission is needed for the improvement or extension of existing houses, if the new work is complementary to the existing dwelling and a useful building is to be given a further lease of life, the application will be considered sympathetically.

On the ground the roofscape is already mixed. The Design and Access Statement surveys that mixture and identifies nearby properties that have undergone significant roof alterations, loft conversions or the addition of new upper floors. Those examples include Nos. 34, 55, 56, 57 and 62 Hall Lane. They demonstrate front dormers, enlarged roof profiles, extended ridge lines and flat-roof elements. The DAS

is correct that these are now an established local approach to creating usable roof space, and that they produce a diverse architectural character rather than a uniform roofscape.

The Design and Access Statement specifically records properties that already incorporate flat roof elements within their roof structures. These include crown roofs, concealed flat roof valleys, flat-roofed dormers and larger roof extensions introduced to create habitable accommodation and improve headroom. The DAS identifies examples at Nos. 25, 42, 48, 54, 62, 65, 73, 75, 77, 79 and 81 Hall Lane, and at No. 8 Ingrebourne Gardens. Unlike many of those examples, the flat element proposed here is positioned centrally within the roof structure and is concealed from both the street scene and the rear garden.

Within the immediate street scene and the wider HLPA there are therefore:

- Hipped roofs and gabled roofs, often on adjoining plots.
- Existing Dutch-barn / cropped-gable features, including on the application property itself.
- Crown and part-flat roofs, including wrap-around dormer arrangements which the pre-application officer expressly acknowledged.
- Large rear dormers and loft conversions granted and implemented along Hall Lane and the side roads (Deyncourt Gardens, Ashburnham Gardens, Engayne Gardens, Waldegrave Gardens).
- Recent new-build and replacement dwellings in the wider Hall Lane area introducing contemporary massing and roof forms.

The pre-application officer recorded this mixture in terms. The assertion that a modest crown is "not generally characteristic" cannot be elevated into a prohibition when the officer's own survey of the locality records hips, gables and smaller crowns already present, when the DAS photographs the same variety, and when the HLPA SPD itself does not prescribe a roof type.

2. The Development Plan and Material Considerations

Planning law requires that applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for this site comprises the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (adopted November 2021) and the London Plan 2021. The National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) is a material consideration of the first importance. The Hall Lane Policy Area SPD (2009) and the Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD (2011) are material considerations. The Architectural Hub Design and Access Statement submitted with this application is part of the evidence base.

2.1 Policy matrix

Topic	NPPF 2026	Havering Local Plan	London Plan 2021
Well-designed places / character	DP3 (context, liveability, identity, built form)	Policy 26 Urban design	D3 Design-led approach; D4 Good design
Residential amenity and space standards	DP3 liveability; healthy communities	Policy 7 Residential design and amenity	D6 Housing quality and standards (2.5m ceiling height)
Hall Lane / plot character	DP3(1) respond to context without precluding change	Policy 10(vi); paras 7.8.7-7.8.8; Policy 26	D3(D)(1) and (11) local distinctiveness
Adaptations / independent living	Social objective; inclusive design	Policy 7: support adaptations enabling residents to live independently	D5 Inclusive design; D7 Accessible housing
Effective use of land	Making effective use of land; DP3 built form	Policy 3 / design-led optimisation of existing stock	D3 Optimising site capacity

2.2 Supplementary planning documents

- Hall Lane Policy Area SPD (February 2009), Zone A. Protects spacious, landscaped plots and resists harmful subdivision. Extensions to existing houses that are complementary and give a useful building a further lease of life are to be considered sympathetically.
- Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD (March 2011). Chapters on roof extensions, loft conversions and dormers, and the 45-degree amenity test. Dormers should sit well within the roof plane, be set down from the ridge and up from the eaves, relate to existing fenestration, and preferably have pitched roofs with tile-hung cheeks and faces.

Neither SPD freezes roof form. The Extensions SPD's caution against converting a characteristic hip to a gable or crown is a starting point for assessment, not a blanket ban. It must be applied to the actual character of this street, which the pre-application officer accepted is mixed, and weighed against Local Plan Policy 7 (space standards, ceiling heights, and support for adaptations) and London Plan Policy D6.

2.3 Planning history of the application site

The Council has already accepted incremental enlargement of this house. That history is part of the site's character and is a material consideration under NPPF DP3(1).

Reference	Description and decision
P0903.18	First floor side and part first floor front / alterations to front elevation. Removal of two rear dormers and new single enlarged rear dormer. Approved.
P1153.17	First floor side extension over garage with alterations to main roof over. Approved.
P1119.17	Retrospective planning permission for a single storey side and rear extension. Approved.
P0807.17	First floor side extension over garage with alterations to main roof over. Withdrawn.
W0170.26	Pre-application advice on the current roof reconfiguration. Officer recorded the mixed roofscape, accepted front rooflights, asked for street scenes / CGIs, and concluded only that the Council will need to come to an informed view once a full application is submitted.

The 2017 and 2018 permissions already altered the main roof and replaced two rear dormers with a single enlarged rear dormer. The Design and Access Statement records that this earlier loft conversion remains impractical because of limited head height. The present proposal is the next, and last, step in making the roof space a genuine habitable storey rather than a compromised loft.

3. The Proposal: The Original (PP01) Scheme

This application seeks permission for the original scheme shown on Architectural Hub drawings AHUB_2602007 Rev PP01. It is not the reduced PP02 iteration prepared during pre-application discussions. The original scheme is preferred, and is justified, because it is the only arrangement that delivers Building Regulations-compliant, genuinely usable headroom across Bedroom 5 and its associated dressing room and en-suite.

Section 1.2 records the applicants' own account of living in this room. The Design and Access Statement adds the measured problem: restricted headroom through the stairwell and the principal bedroom, with parts of the circulation route below 1.8 metres. Occupants stoop. Clothes cannot be stored on walls because there are no straight walls. The room is used only to sleep. That is not acceptable living accommodation, and it is not what Local Plan Policy 7 or London Plan Policy D6 require.

3.1 What is proposed

The works, as described in the Design and Access Statement and shown on the PP01 drawings, comprise:

- The existing ridge is raised by 600mm. Existing attic ceiling level is +8.281 m; the proposed exterior ridge is +8.938 m. The increase is modest, contained within the existing eaves line, and does not push the building above the prevailing two-and-a-half storey reading of Hall Lane.
- A Dutch-barn roof profile is formed with chamfered corners and a centrally positioned, concealed flat roof (crown) section. The crown is the minimum necessary to produce a level 2.48 m ceiling over the usable floor of Bedroom 5. Unlike many nearby flat-roof examples recorded in the DAS, the flat element is set within the roof structure and is concealed from both the street scene and the rear garden.
- To the front, the roof form is simplified to a more consistent composition: a continuous roof slope and chamfered corners that soften massing and reduce visual impact. The existing Dutch-barn language is retained and matched. Front rooflights are proposed; the pre-application officer raised no objection to these.

- To the rear, the existing assortment of differing dormer styles is replaced with three evenly spaced pitched-roof dormers. They are set down from the raised ridge and up from the eaves, with tile-hung cheeks and faces. The DAS correctly describes this as a cleaner, more balanced architectural composition.
- Second-floor reconfiguration retains Bedroom 5, the dressing room and the en-suite, but with an extensive 2.0 m+ headroom zone, built-in storage and a compliant, practical staircase in its current position. A rooflight over the stairwell lights the circulation space. Sections demonstrate a 2,480 mm floor-to-ceiling height through the principal volume.
- Matching materials throughout: roof tiles to match existing in colour, profile and texture; tile hanging to dormer cheeks and faces; window proportions related to the existing first-floor openings.
- No change to the building footprint. No change to the outbuilding. No loss of garden. Parking and access from Hall Lane via the existing driveway and front entrance are unaltered. External side access is unaffected.

3.2 Drawing schedule (original scheme)

This statement is to be read with the Architectural Hub PP01 pack and the Design and Access Statement:

- AHUB_2602007_01 Site Plan (existing); 02-04 Floor Plans (existing); 05 Roof Plan (existing); 06-07 Elevations (existing); 08-09 Sections (existing); 10 Outbuilding (existing).
- AHUB_2602007_11-13 Plans (proposed, PP01); 14 Roof Plan (proposed, PP01); 15-16 Elevations (proposed, PP01); 17-18 Sections (proposed, PP01); 19 Street Scene (proposed).

The PP02 drawings prepared during pre-application discussion are not the scheme applied for.

3.3 Why the original scheme, not the reduced PP02 scheme

During pre-application the officer asked the agent to reduce the extent of the flat roof, remove a roof lantern and redesign the dormers. Those changes were offered in good faith as a working draft. They are not a concession that the original scheme is unacceptable, and they are not a requirement of the development plan.

The cost of those reductions is paid entirely inside the house. On the PP02 second-floor plan the 2.0 m usable zone contracts; eaves slopes reclaim floor that the family need for a double bedroom, circulation and storage. Occupants would continue to stoop at the edges of the principal bedroom and on parts of the stair. That outcome conflicts with:

- London Plan Policy D6(F)(8): a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 2.5 m for at least 75 per cent of the GIA of each dwelling. The original scheme is the arrangement that allows the second floor, taken as habitable accommodation, to approach that standard. The existing loft, and the reduced PP02 loft, do not.
- London Plan Policy D6(F)(5)-(6): floor area with headroom below 1.5 m does not count as GIA; area between 0.9 m and 1.5 m counts only at 50 per cent. Reducing the crown simply manufactures more dead floor that planning policy itself discounts.
- Local Plan Policy 7(iv): developments that meet National Space Standards and the London Plan requirement for floor-to-ceiling heights will be supported. Policy 7 also states, in terms, that the Council will support and encourage proposals which provide adaptations enabling residents to live independently and safely in their own homes.
- Building Regulations Approved Document K / F and the practical use of a family bedroom. A loft in which an adult cannot stand upright across the bed, the dressing space and parts of the stair (the DAS records circulation below 1.8 m) is not habitable accommodation worthy of a five-bedroom family house on Hall Lane.

The original scheme therefore has a clear, policy-backed purpose that the reduced scheme does not serve. The additional external volume is the minimum required to make the inside of the house work. That is a design-led response of the kind London Plan Policy D3 requires, not an exercise in maximising bulk. The Design and Access Statement records a further practical consequence of further reduction: it would compromise the ability to provide an appropriate fire-regulated door and separation at the head of the staircase, together with adequate circulation through the room. That is a Building Regulations issue as well as a living-conditions one.

3.4 What the original scheme does not do

- It does not subdivide the plot, reduce garden depth, or introduce a new dwelling (the harms the HLPA SPD and Local Plan Policy 10 actually exist to prevent).
- It does not raise the eaves or project the front wall.
- It does not introduce a full gable-to-gable box or a wrap-around dormer of the kind the officer associated with other, smaller crowns in the locality.
- It does not infringe a 45-degree line from any neighbouring habitable-room window sill.
- It does not alter parking, access, trees (other than requiring their protection during construction) or the outbuilding.

4. Response to Pre-Application Advice W0170.26

The pre-application response is cautious. It is not hostile, and it is not a direction to refuse. The officer's closing words are that the Council will need to come to an informed view once the application is submitted. That is an invitation to evidence, not a verdict. Each point raised is addressed below.

4.1 *"Where hipped roofs are characteristic, a new crown roof is generally not accepted."*

The Extensions SPD says this. Two qualifications defeat its mechanical application here.

First, hipped roofs are not the characteristic of this house or this street. The host dwelling already presents paired Dutch-barn gables to Hall Lane, front rooflights and an altered rear roof (P0903.18). The officer themselves *recorded "a mixture of hip and gable roof" and "some crown roofs ... with side and rear wrap round dormers."* The DAS photographs the same variety, including crowns and flat-roof elements at nearby Hall Lane properties. A policy that bites only where hipped roofs form a characteristic of the house and/or street does not bite where that premise is false.

Second, "generally not accepted" is guidance, not a development-plan prohibition. Local Plan Policy 26 requires proposals to respect and complement local character, scale, massing and rhythm, not to replicate a single historic roof type. Paragraph 11.1.2 of the Local Plan is express: respecting local character does not necessarily mean replicating it. NPPF DP3(1) is to the same effect: proposals should respond to context so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings, but this should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate.

The original scheme keeps the existing eaves, keeps and matches the Dutch-barn frontispiece, uses the same tiles and tile hanging, chamfers the corners to reduce perceived bulk, and confines the crown to a central, set-back plane that will read from Hall Lane as a slightly higher, still pitched roof with familiar gable features. That is complement, not rupture.

4.2 "The roof design proposed is not considered to be generally characteristic ... and therefore has the potential to give rise to some degree of visual harm."

"Some degree of visual harm" is a low-level, qualified finding. It is not the language of unacceptable harm, and it is not a conclusion that Policy 26 is breached. Three points reduce that potential harm below any threshold that could justify refusal.

The street scene drawing (AHUB_2602007_19) already requested by the officer is submitted with this application. It shows Nos. 38, 40 and 42 together. The 600mm ridge raise is perceptible on paper. From Hall Lane, behind the existing front gables, the front-garden trees and the varied ridges of neighbouring

houses, it will read as a modest adjustment within an already varied roofscape. The existing ridges of Nos. 38 and 42 are not a uniform datum. Hall Lane does not have a regulated cornice line.

The original scheme retains more pitched modelling than a simple flat-topped box. Dutch-barn ends, chamfered corners, three pitched rear dormers and matching tile hanging break down the crown so that it is a component of a modelled roof, not a platform. The DAS emphasises that the flat element is concealed from the street and the rear garden. Materials are specified to match. Conditions can ensure materials match.

Even if a residual change in silhouette is perceived, it must be weighed in the planning balance against the internal living-conditions benefits that Policy 7 and London Plan D6 expressly support. A theoretical preference for an unaltered hip cannot outweigh the delivery of habitable, regulation-height accommodation in an existing family house. NPPF DP3(3) requires substantial weight to be given to compliance with relevant development-plan design policies, and Policy 7 is one of those policies.

4.3 "The proposal has been amended ... This represents an improvement."

The officer's comment that PP02 was "*an improvement*" is noted and respected. It is not a finding that PP01 is unacceptable, and it is not a finding that PP02 is the only approvable scheme. The comment sits in a paragraph that then asks for street scenes and CGIs so that a balanced assessment can be made. That assessment is what this application now enables.

Improvement is not the legal test. The test is whether the original scheme, taken as a whole and weighed against the development plan, causes harm that is unacceptable. For the reasons in this statement it does not. The original scheme also delivers benefits the reduced scheme cannot: usable 2.48 m headroom across Bedroom 5, a functioning dressing room and en-suite, a stair that can be used without stooping, and a second floor that can be occupied as a room rather than a loft. Those benefits are not cosmetic.

4.4 Dormers "should be contained well within the roof space."

Agreed. The original scheme sets three evenly spaced rear dormers below the new ridge and up from the eaves. Cheeks and faces are tile-hung to match the main roof, as the officer requested. Pitched dormer roofs are used in preference to box dormers. Window proportions relate to the first-floor openings. Front rooflights are accepted by the officer. The original scheme therefore meets the Extensions SPD's dormer tests. Any remaining point of detailing is capable of being secured by condition.

4.5 The 45-degree rule and neighbouring windows

The officer noted that Council records show windows in the flank elevations of Nos. 38 and 42. The submitted plans address this directly. The facing flank of No. 42 has no habitable-room windows at first floor (see approved plans under P0697.23, annotated on drawing AHUB_2602007_12). The facing flank of No. 38 is annotated with the predicted position of windows; none are habitable rooms serving principal living space at the relevant level. A 45-degree line from the predicted sill level is drawn on the proposed first-floor plan and on the street-scene drawing and is not infringed.

The Extensions SPD itself applies less weight to non-habitable rooms. Local Plan Policy 7 resists only unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of daylight or outlook. A 600mm ridge raise behind existing flanks, with no new side-facing habitable windows looking into neighbouring habitable rooms, does not produce unacceptable amenity harm. Daylight and sunlight to neighbouring rear gardens and principal windows are unaffected to any degree that BRE guidance would treat as material.

4.6 Trees: BS 5837

Agreed. Front-garden and street trees will be protected during construction in accordance with BS 5837:2012. A simple tree-protection method statement can be conditioned. No tree is proposed for removal. The landscaped character that the HLPA SPD actually protects is therefore preserved.

4.7 The officer's conclusion is not a refusal signal

The pre-application response ends by stating that a full assessment will be undertaken once an application is submitted; that photos and the pre-application reference should be included; and that the Council will come to an informed view. The disclosure statement confirms the advice is not binding. Nothing in that language supports treating the original scheme adversely. This statement, the PP01 drawings, the Design and Access Statement, the street scene and site photographs supply the material the officer said they needed.

5. Assessment Against the Development Plan

5.1 Havering Local Plan Policy 7: Residential design and amenity

Policy 7 has two directions of travel, and the original scheme satisfies both.

Towards neighbours, the Council will support developments that do not result in unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy or outlook; unacceptable loss of daylight and sunlight; or unacceptable noise, vibration and disturbance. As set out in section 4.5, the 45-degree test is met, flank windows on

either side are non-habitable or absent at the relevant level, and there is no noise-generating change of use. Amenity impact is not a credible refusal reason.

Towards occupiers, the Council will support residential development that meets National Space Standards and the London Plan requirement for floor-to-ceiling heights; that is sited and designed to maximise daylight and sunlight; and that promotes independent living. The policy text ends with an unqualified encouragement: the Council will support and encourage proposals which provide adaptations enabling residents to live independently and safely in their own homes.

The existing second floor fails that test. Bedroom 5 is a loft with restricted 2.0 m zones, circulation below 1.8 m on the stair, and large areas of sub-1.5 m height that London Plan D6 would not even count as floorspace. Occupants stoop. The original scheme is the adaptation that converts that loft into a room with a 2.48 m ceiling over its usable area, a compliant stair, proper storage and an en-suite. That is precisely the kind of adaptation Policy 7 says the Council will support. Reducing the scheme so that occupants continue to stoop would frustrate Policy 7 in the name of a roof-form preference that Policy 7 does not contain.

5.2 Havering Local Plan Policy 26: Urban design

Policy 26 supports proposals that are informed by, respect and complement the distinctive qualities, identity and character of the site and local area; that are of high architectural quality; that respect, reinforce and complement the local street scene; that respond to distinctive local building forms and respect established scale, massing and rhythm; and that are built of high-quality materials that integrate with surrounding buildings.

The original scheme does those things:

- It is informed by the host house. Dutch-barn gables, chamfered corners, tile hanging, window proportions and eaves lines are carried through. The front elevation remains a pair of modelled gables addressing Hall Lane, not a new architectural language.
- It respects scale and massing. As the DAS records, the only significant increase in height is the 600mm ridge lift. Unchanged eaves and footprint keep the increment modest. Chamfered corners further reduce perceived bulk. The street-scene drawing demonstrates that the house remains comfortable between Nos. 38 and 42.
- It complements the street scene rather than copying a single neighbour. Hall Lane's rhythm is large houses, deep plots, varied roofs and strong front gardens, all retained.

- Materials match. Roof tiles will match existing colour, profile and texture. Dormer cheeks and faces will be tile-hung. Conditions can require samples.

Policy 26 does not require the roof of No. 40 to remain as it is. Paragraph 11.1.2 confirms that respecting character does not mean replicating it. Paragraph 11.1.12 cautions against major variations only where uniform building heights form a distinctive character. They do not, on this stretch of Hall Lane.

5.3 Hall Lane Policy Area and Local Plan Policy 10

Policy 10(vi) resists plot subdivision and garden development within the Hall Lane and Emerson Park Character Areas unless it can be robustly demonstrated that character is preserved and plot sizes remain consistent with the surroundings. This application does neither of those things. It does not subdivide. It does not build in the garden. The outbuilding is untouched. The long, landscaped rear garden that paragraph 7.8.7 identifies as the source of the area's character is preserved in full.

The HLPA SPD's Zone A criteria on minimum site area and frontage apply to new dwellings and flatted redevelopment, not to a householder roof alteration. The SPD's only applicable sentence is the sympathetic-treatment paragraph for improvements and extensions that give a useful building a further lease of life. That is this application.

5.4 Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD 2011

Chapter 8 is the relevant chapter. Its tests, applied fairly, are met:

- The front elevation is not converted from a hip to a blank gable. The existing Dutch-barn pair is retained and matched, with chamfered corners to soften the raised ridge. Front rooflights are accepted.
- Three rear dormers sit within the roof plane, below the ridge and up from the eaves, with pitched roofs and tile-hung cheeks and faces.
- The 45-degree amenity test is met. Less weight attaches to non-habitable flank windows.
- Materials match the existing roof.

The SPD's general warning against crowns where hipped roofs are characteristic is addressed in section 4.1. It is a guideline written for streets of uniform hips. Hall Lane Zone A is not such a street. Guidance must accord with the development-plan policies on living conditions where the two pull in different directions; it cannot be used to require a family to occupy a loft that fails the London Plan ceiling-height standard.

5.5 London Plan Policy D3: the design-led approach

Policy D3 requires development to make the best use of land by following a design-led approach that produces the most appropriate form for the site. Optimising capacity does not mean maximising it; it means the form that best delivers the design outcomes in Part D. Those outcomes include enhancing local context through layout, scale, appearance and shape (D3(D)(1)); delivering appropriate outlook, privacy and amenity (D3(D)(7)); achieving indoor environments that are comfortable and inviting (D3(D)(10)); and responding to the special and valued features of the locality (D3(D)(11)).

The original scheme is the design-led answer to a defined problem: a second floor that cannot currently be used as a bedroom without stooping, and a stair with sections below 1.8 m. The form follows that function. The reduced PP02 scheme is a less appropriate form because it fails D3(D)(10). It does not produce a comfortable indoor environment, while delivering no material improvement in the street scene that D3(D)(1) and (11) would recognise as necessary.

5.6 London Plan Policy D6: housing quality and ceiling height

Policy D6(F)(8) requires a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 2.5 m for at least 75 per cent of the GIA of each dwelling. The supporting text at paragraph 3.6.3 explains why: daylight, ventilation, cooling and a sense of space. Areas below 1.5 m do not count as GIA. The existing loft fails this framework. The original scheme is designed around a 2.48 m ceiling through the principal second-floor volume, as close to the D6 standard as the existing eaves and a 600mm ridge raise will allow. That is the planning justification for the crown. Without it, large parts of Bedroom 5 remain discounted floorspace in which an adult cannot stand.

Policy D6 applies to new dwellings including conversions. Even if it is applied here only as a material benchmark rather than a rigid standard for an existing house, it is a benchmark the Council has adopted through Local Plan Policy 7(iv). The original scheme is the proposal that accords with that.

5.7 NPPF 2026: DP3 Key principles for well-designed places

DP3(1) requires proposals to respond to the history, character and features of their site and setting so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings, through arrangement, materials and architectural features. It should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate. DP3(2) then applies, so far as relevant to a householder roof alteration:

- Liveability: homes that function well over their lifetime, are robust and easy to look after. A second floor that can be used as a bedroom without stooping is liveable; a compromised loft is not.

- Climate: layouts, massing and materials that conserve energy. Re-using and upgrading the existing roof structure is preferable to building new floorspace elsewhere. Additional roof insulation and a tighter building envelope are inherent in the works, as the DAS sustainability section records.
- Built form: distinguish public and private, enhance views where appropriate. The public face to Hall Lane remains a pair of Dutch-barn gables behind a landscaped front garden.
- Identity: a coherent palette of materials and design features. Matching tiles, matching hanging tiles, matching Dutch barns.

DP3(3) directs that proposals should be refused if, without clear justification, they conflict with paragraph 1 or relevant aspects of paragraph 2, or with explicit design standards in the development plan. Substantial weight is to be given to compliance with relevant development-plan policies. The original scheme complies with Policies 7 and 26. It has clear justification under D6 and Policy 7 for the limited change in roof form. There is no DP3 basis for refusal.

DP3(5) additionally gives substantial weight to designs which help raise the standard of design more generally, so long as they are consistent with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. Raising the quality of the internal accommodation of an existing Hall Lane family house, while keeping its external language, is consistent with that paragraph.

6. Other Material Considerations

6.1 The pre-application process as a material consideration

NPPF DP4 and the planning practice guidance expect design quality to be considered through pre-application engagement. That engagement has happened (W0170.26). The officer asked for street scenes, CGIs or equivalent visualisation, photographs, a tree-protection note, tile-hung dormer cheeks, and a record of the pre-application on the application form. This application supplies those things. The officer did not say the original quantum must be abandoned. Treating the pre-application as if it had rewritten the development plan would be an error of approach.

6.2 Precedent and consistency

The Council has approved roof alterations and large rear dormers at this property (P0903.18, P1153.17) and has permitted a wide range of loft conversions, hip-to-gable alterations, crown roofs and dormers across Upminster. The DAS records comparable Hall Lane examples at Nos. 34, 55, 56, 57 and 62, together with flat-roof elements at Nos. 25, 42, 48, 54, 62, 65, 73, 75, 77, 79 and 81 Hall Lane and No. 8 Ingrebourne Gardens. Consistency of decision-making is a material consideration. It cannot be right that

No. 40 is held to a stricter roof vernacular than the street actually exhibits, particularly when the HLPA SPD's concern is landscape and plot size rather than ridge profile.

6.3 Fallback and the existing situation

The existing second floor is already used as Bedroom 5, a dressing room and a bathroom. The fallback is continued occupation of a room the applicants cannot stand up in, cannot furnish with wardrobes, and cannot use except to sleep, together with a stair that has sections below 1.8 m. The application does not create a new dwelling or a new use; it makes an existing use acceptable. That is a benefit to which weight should be given.

6.4 Access, layout and construction

Access remains from Hall Lane via the existing driveway and central front entrance. Internal circulation at ground and first floor is unchanged. The attic stair stays in its current position but is made usable by the additional headroom. Side access around the property is unaffected. There is no additional parking demand.

The DAS records that the works will upgrade the roof fabric: high-performance insulation, airtight detailing and efficient glazing as part of the re-roofing. Existing vegetation is retained. Those are incidental benefits of doing the work properly; they are not relied on as the principal justification, which remains living conditions.

6.5 Conditions

The original scheme is capable of being made acceptable, if any residual detailing concern remains, by short, precise conditions:

- Matching roof tiles and hanging tiles, with samples submitted before those works begin.
- Dormer cheeks and faces to be tile-hung; dormers to be constructed in accordance with the approved elevations.
- Tree protection to BS 5837 for the duration of construction.
- The flat roof of the crown not to be used as a terrace or sitting-out area.

Those conditions meet the NPPF tests of necessity, relevance, precision and reasonableness. They are the proportionate response to the officer's detailing comments. They are not a reason to force the applicant back to a scheme that fails internally.

7. Planning Balance and Conclusion

The original PP01 scheme is a modest, design-led alteration to an already-extended family house on a deep, landscaped Hall Lane plot. It raises the ridge by 600mm, forms a contained and concealed crown behind retained Dutch-barn gables with chamfered corners, and inserts three subordinate, tile-hung pitched rear dormers in order to produce a second floor that can actually be occupied. That is the scheme the applicant asks the Council to determine.

The development-plan policies that carry the greatest weight on the issues in this case are Local Plan Policies 7 and 26, London Plan Policies D3 and D6, and NPPF DP3. The original scheme complies with all of them. Policy 7 supports adaptations that let people live safely and independently in their own homes and requires ceiling heights that match the London Plan. Policy 26 requires a complementary response to local character, which this scheme provides through matching form, materials and an unchanged footprint and garden. D3 requires the most appropriate form for the site; that form is the one that solves the headroom problem. D6 explains why 2.5 m ceilings matter and why floorspace under 1.5 m does not count. DP3 permits change where it is justified and gives substantial weight to development-plan compliance.

The Hall Lane Policy Area SPD does not say otherwise. It protects spacious plots and landscaped gardens. Both are untouched. Its instruction on householder works is to consider complementary improvements sympathetically. The Extensions SPD's caution against crowns applies where hips are characteristic. They are not characteristic of this house or this street, as the pre-application officer recorded and as the Design and Access Statement demonstrates with local examples.

The pre-application advice flagged a potential for *"some degree of visual harm."* That potential is addressed by the street-scene drawing, by the retention of the existing architectural language, by chamfered corners and a concealed crown, by matching materials, and by the modest scale of a 600mm raise. It does not amount to unacceptable harm under Policy 26, and it is decisively outweighed by the living-conditions benefits that Policy 7 and Policy D6 exist to secure.

The reduced PP02 scheme is not before the Council. It would re-create the very defect this application is designed to cure. There is no policy requirement to occupy a stooped bedroom without wardrobes, or a stair below 1.8 m, in order to shave a few square metres off a flat roof plane that will barely be seen from Hall Lane. Still less is there a requirement that the occupant should go on stooping around that room while recovering from a long-standing back condition.

It is therefore respectfully requested that householder planning permission be granted for the original scheme at 40 Hall Lane, Upminster, subject only to the limited conditions identified in section 6.5.

Helen Morris Ruffle MA MRTPI

Visionary Planning UK

October 2026

This statement is issued for the applicant's use in support of a householder planning application at 40 Hall Lane, Upminster. It should be read with Architectural Hub drawings AHUB_2602007 Rev PP01 (original scheme), the Design and Access Statement, the existing and proposed street scene, and site photographs.