
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 March 2017

by Michael J Hetherington BSc(Hons) MA MRTPI MCIEEM

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 23 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/16/3162364
12 Leas Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4QW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Dr Natasha Fox against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application ref. 16/P/01115, dated 31 May 2015, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is: roof conversion and extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and area.

Reasons

3. No. 12 is an Edwardian two-storey semi-detached house, located near to the centre of Guildford. In 2016, the Council issued a Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed extension to the main roof of the dwelling, including a hip-to-gable enlargement and the installation of a dormer window and rooflights. The present application incorporates this proposal, and adds a further extension to the projecting rear roof slope of the dwelling. Overall, the scheme would create an approximately L-shaped second floor level within the dwelling. The extension would be mainly flat-roofed, with a front-facing roof slope containing two Velux windows.
 4. It is accepted that Leas Road is on the edge of Guildford's commercial district, and that an office block is located across the road from the appeal property. Nevertheless, no. 12 is one of a number of semi-detached dwellings on the north side of the street with a broadly consistent domestic scale and character. The appeal property is therefore seen in the context of a settled and mainly residential street scene. While at least one dwelling has a main roof extension of a similar nature to that approved for no. 12, I saw on my visit that the rear roof slopes of houses in the site's vicinity are not characterised by significant flat-roofed additions.
 5. The appeal scheme would create a largely flat-roofed structure extending across most of the rear roof slope of the dwelling. It would differ in scale from the approved extension, being markedly larger. I share the Council's view that
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the extent of flat roof that is now proposed, and the box-like profile that would result, would be out of keeping with the prevailing character of the appeal property and nearby dwellings as described above. To my mind, it would appear both over-dominant and incongruous. While views towards the rear roof of the dwelling from Leas Road are limited, I saw on my visit that the upper rear elevations of no. 12 and nearby houses are visible from William Road. The adverse effects described above would therefore be apparent to passers-by.

6. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal scheme would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the existing building and area, contrary to policies H8 and G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003. While I note the appellant's references to roof extensions on streets located on the other side of Woodbridge Road, my conclusion relates to the particular circumstances of the appeal property and its surroundings, as described above.
7. The appellant suggests that an alternative design solution could be adopted, for example incorporating a sloped roof. However, such a design change would represent a material amendment to the original proposal. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined this appeal on the basis of the scheme that was considered by the Council.
8. For the above reasons, and notwithstanding the lack of local objections to the proposal, my overall conclusion is that the appeal should not succeed.

M J Hetherington

INSPECTOR