

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 April 2017

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

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

Decision date: 24th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R3650/D/17/3168715

44 Silo Road, Farncombe, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3PA

- 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 Mrs Gemma Long against the decision of Waverley Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. WA/2016/1961, dated 28 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 29 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a front and rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed dormers on the character and appearance of the existing building and the streetscene.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal dwelling is in the middle of a terrace of three. The building as a whole is of a simple design with a pleasingly uncluttered and symmetrical appearance. The living area within the roof space currently receives natural light from an evenly spaced row of rooflights at the front and rear, with each dwelling having two of them on both the front and rear elevations.
 4. From my assessment, the erection of a dormer on both of these elevations at No. 44 in the middle of the terrace would be seen as an incongruous feature, wholly out of keeping with the appearance of the building. This effect would be particularly due to No. 44 appearing so different to its neighbours on either side as a result of the loss of symmetry. In terms of detail, the dormers would sit on the eaves of the front and rear elevations and this is contrary to the Council's design guidance in its Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2010.
 5. The front dormer would in particular draw the eye given its prominence in this part of Silo Road, and because of this I consider that harm would be caused not only to the appearance of the building itself but also to the character and appearance of the street scene.
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6. Having seen the upstairs rooms of the appeal property as part of my visit I can entirely understand that through the creation of the additional headroom the proposed dormers would enhance the living accommodation of the dwelling. I have taken this into account, but whilst I sympathise with the appellant's aspiration to improve her living conditions, I do not consider that this outweighs the harm that would be caused.
7. The grounds of appeal include a number of photographs of dwellings with dormer windows within half a mile of the appeal property. I have noted these but on my visit I also saw that there were relatively few in the immediate context of No. 44, the exception being the three dormer windows in a side elevation of No. 35A Silo Road. However, these do not in my view justify the appeal scheme with its somewhat different design and proportions, and in particular the introduction of dormers into the middle of a terrace of three dwellings of essentially the same appearance.
8. Overall, I conclude that the appeal proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and the streetscene. This would be in conflict with Policies D1 & D4 of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002; the Council's Design Guidance, and Section 7: 'Requiring Good Design' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
9. I have also taken account of the grounds of appeal's references to the absence of other harm and neighbour objection and to the appellant's interpretation of local and national policy. However, because of the proposal's incongruous and therefore harmful effect on the building and its surroundings I am not persuaded that these factors are sufficient to enable me to reach a different conclusion.
10. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR

