
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: 2nd May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/17/3168710

4 Dene Road, Guildford GU1 4DB

- 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 Mr Jonathan & Mrs Anette Young against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 16/P/01930, dated 23 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the existing conservatory and a proposed single storey rear extension; conversion of mono-pitched roof to form bathroom and laundry room, and alterations to the rear terrace and steps to the garden (2nd application).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the demolition of the existing conservatory and a proposed single storey rear extension; conversion of mono-pitched roof to form bathroom and laundry room, and alterations to the rear terrace and steps to the garden at 4 Dene Road, Guildford in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 16/P/01930, dated 23 September 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision;
 - 2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Series: P208-0216/PA/ & Plan Nos. 001; 002; 003; 004; 009; 010; 011; 012; 013;
 - 3) Where stated on the application form the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the additional box dormer to that already permitted on the character and appearance of the host building and as a consequence whether the character or appearance of the Guildford Town Centre Conservation Area would be preserved or enhanced.

Reasons

3. The Council's concern is that the addition of the second box dormer to the larger one already permitted under permission ref. 16/P/01472 would be
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harmful to the appearance of the roof, with excessive coverage and an unsatisfactory horizontal emphasis.

4. However, whilst I consider concern on this point is not entirely without justification, on balance I take the view that the gap between the two as a result of the chimney, although modest, would be effective in avoiding the dormers being read together as an inappropriate and harmfully unsympathetic addition with the horizontal emphasis that the Council alleges. The height of the chimney above the ridge and the fact that it forms one of a matching pair would have the effect of forming a visual frame to the proposed dormer, reinforcing its separateness and drawing the eye.
5. Similarly, the fact that the additional dormer is smaller both in width and depth is visually significant, especially in its greater distance to the eaves, and this also prevents a read across and a perception of the extensions over-dominating the original roof. Moreover, in views of the property's rear elevation, the second dormer would to all intents and purposes not be discernible as it is set entirely within the extent of its larger neighbour. Face-on views as illustrated in Drawing No. 012 would be largely non-existent as a result of the shielding effect of No. 2, the adjoining house.
6. The Council also refers to a threat to the chimney stacks, but I see no reasonable basis for this concern, especially as the retention of the stack between the two proposed dormers has structural advantages in terms of buttressing the internal wall.
7. Overall, I conclude that there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the host building and taking both this into account and the presence of existing box dormers in the vicinity, these aspects of the conservation area would therefore be preserved. Therefore would therefore be no conflict with Policies HE7 & H8 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003; the Council's Residential Extensions SPG 2003 and Section 12: 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. As regards the latter, as I consider that no harm would be caused to the conservation area as a designated heritage asset, there is no need to consider whether there is any public benefit to be taken into account.
8. I shall therefore allow the appeal. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A condition in respect of matching materials will protect the character and appearance of the building and safeguard visual amenity.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR