

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 April 2017

by F Rafiq BSc (Hons), MCD, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4th May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/17/3168331

55 West End Lane, Esher, KT10 8LF

- 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 Ms Nicola Moore against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2016/3274 dated 10 October 2016 was refused by notice dated 12 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with three rear facing dormers, two front facing roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion with three rear facing dormers, two front facing roof lights at 55 West End Lane, Esher, KT10 8LF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2016/3274, dated 10 October 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 hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan (2016/19/P-LOC), Existing Floor Plans (2016/19/PL01), Existing Elevations (2016/19/PL02), Proposed Floor Plans (2016/19/PL03), Proposed Elevations (2016/19/PL04 Rev A) and Site Plan (2016/19/PL05).
 - 3) 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 proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, the area and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the West End Conservation Area (Conservation Area).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a modestly sized two storey mid-terrace house, which forms part of a short row of three properties. The area is characterised by
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terraces and semi-detached properties that have a cottage scale. Many of these are set behind wide grass verges or gardens and the appeal property itself, which is situated close to the junction of West End Lane with Winterdown Road, faces an area of open space. Although the appeal terrace is a more modern addition than much of the surrounding built form, its similar scale and its setting behind a short front garden, contributes to the open, semi-rural character of the Conservation Area.

4. The proposal seeks permission for three rear facing dormers as well as roof lights to the front. Although comments have been made stating that the proposal is a single larger dormer with three windows, it is clear from the submitted plans that they would appear as three distinct dormers separated by recessed lead flashing. I appreciate the modest scale of the host property and the reference to the large size of the proposed dormers. However, they would be set down from the ridge of the house and back from the eaves as well as away from the boundaries with the neighbouring properties to either side. Each of the three dormers would also have a hipped roof form, ensuring they would not appear as a single box dormer. Taken together, I do not consider the scale, mass or the design of the proposal would make them incongruous or over dominant features on the roof of the host dwelling, particularly as they would be located to the rear of the dwelling, with limited views from the streetscene.
5. The adjoining property at No. 54 West End Lane has two rear facing dormers and I was able to see these at the time of my visit. The proposal would broadly align horizontally with the development on this neighbouring property. Although references have been to the planning applications at No. 54 and the need for two distinct dormers, I am not aware of the full circumstances of the development at this neighbouring property. In any event, the appeal property has three first floor windows on the rear elevation which the appeal proposal, despite not being perfectly aligned with, seeks to reflect at dormer level. In this respect, the proposal differs from that on this adjoining property which has two rear windows at first floor level.
6. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the development would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the host property or the area. It would also preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such, it would not conflict with Policies CS9 and CS17 of the Council's Core Strategy or Policies DM2 and DM12 of the Council's Development Management Plan, which seek, amongst other matters, high quality design that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of an area. There would also be no conflict with the Design & Character Supplementary Planning Document Companion Guide: Esher or with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

7. Reference has been made to another application for a ground floor extension at the appeal property. The details of this referenced application are not however before me and I can confirm that I have determined the appeal before me on its own merits.
8. I note concerns have been raised about disruption during the construction period but this would be for a temporary period. The potential increase in the

occupancy of the appeal dwelling and the inadequate levels of parking have also been raised. vThe Council have not raised concerns in this respect and I have not seen evidence to show that the proposal would materially compromise highway safety, to take a different position.

9. I have also noted the comments about the angle of the 3D view presented in the appeal application. I have however been able to properly assess the proposals based on the submitted floor, elevation and site plans.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and having taken into account all other matters raised, including maintenance issues, I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

Conditions

11. The Council have suggested a number of conditions. I consider the standard implementation condition and a condition for the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans to be necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. I will impose a condition in relation to materials to match the existing in the interests of the character and appearance of the building and the Conservation Area.

F Rafiq

INSPECTOR