

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 July 2017

by P Jarvis Bsc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 07 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/17/3175042
50 Crofton Road, Grays RM16 2GZ

- 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 M and Mrs L Patterson against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01683/HHA dated 9 December 2016 was refused by notice dated 7 February 2017.
 - The development is for reconfiguration of dormers (retrospective).
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Procedural

1. As indicated above, the reconfigured dormers have already been installed.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission granted for reconfiguration of dormers (retrospective), at 50 Crofton Road, Grays RM16 2GZ, in accordance with the terms of application ref: 16/01683/HHA, dated 9 December 2016, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall relate to the following approved plans: 1:1250 site location plan (drawing no. 16-1-2-R2) and elevations and site plan (drawing 16-1-2-R1).

Main issue

3. The effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and streetscene.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies along a residential street characterised by semi-detached bungalows of similar age and appearance, set back behind relatively modest front gardens presenting a fairly regular building line to the street. A number of the properties have been extended or altered, including dormer windows in the hipped roofs of the original properties or within extended gabled roofs as at the appeal property.
 5. Annexe 1 to the Thurrock Borough Local Plan (1997) (LP) provides detailed criteria for the control of development in residential areas, with specific guidance for extensions and additions to dwellings. In respect of extensions in roofspaces, it states that dormer windows should not project over the ridge, but be contained entirely within the existing roof slope and on front elevations should not occupy more than 25% of the total area of roof slope on which they
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are constructed. This annexe has been 'saved' until such time as it has been replaced by a later Development Framework document and appears to be used by the Council to support the more up to date policies contained in the Thurrock Core Strategy (2011) (CS). The Council state that the dormers occupy approximately 38% of the roof slope and are thus not in accordance with this guidance.

6. The relevant policies within the CS are CSTP22, PMD1 and PMD2 which seek development that demonstrates high quality design founded on an understanding of, and positive response to, local context, has regard for the amenities of the area and contributes positively to the character of the area.
7. The three dormers that have been installed are not in my view, overly large in relation to the existing extended roof slope and are positioned towards the higher part of the roof so that a reasonable amount of the lower roof slope is retained. In my view, they present a relatively well-balanced front elevation with each dormer lining up with individual elements of the ground floor.
8. A previous permission had permitted two dormers one at each end of the roof slope, with a central roof light, thus the additional third central dormer has resulted in additional bulk to the roof compared to this previous permission. However, I do not consider that this has resulted in a overly cluttered or crowded roof scape.
9. A number of the properties within the immediate and wider streetscene also have front dormers, though from what I saw on my site visit, up to a maximum of two. However, some of the individual dormers were much larger than those on the appeal property and appeared large compared to the size of roof of the host dwelling on which they had been installed. I have also noted the Council's summary in this respect.
10. Whilst I note that the above annexe guidance provides some consistency in terms of what will generally be acceptable, it is my view that, in this instance, having regard to the size of dormers that have been installed and the amount of roof slope that has been retained, they are in keeping with the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider local context.
11. I therefore consider that the development does not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider streetscene. There is thus no conflict with the above CS policies and whilst not adhering to the strict criteria of the 'saved' Annexe to the former Local Plan, the dormers as constructed do not in my view result in any harmful impact.

Conclusions

12. As the development is complete, it is only necessary to impose a condition to relate to the approved plans.
13. I conclude that this appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted.

P Jarvis

INSPECTOR