



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2019 by Emma Worby BSc (Hons)

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA RTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/19/3228342

7 Runnymede Road, Stanford Le Hope SS17 0JY

- 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 Jane Langley against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00196/HHA, dated 7 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion incorporating a new rear dormer, and 2 rooflights to the front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeals Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. The appellant has submitted amended plans with the appeal showing a reduction in size of the proposed rear dormer. These plans were not considered by the Council in their determination of the planning application. While the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme, as the amended plans would result in lesser works being carried out, the Council and interested parties would not be prejudiced by my acceptance of the amended plans. Thus, I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The Council have not raised any concerns regarding the proposed rooflights to the front elevation, and from everything which I have seen in the submission and on my site visit I have no reason to disagree. Therefore, the main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed rear dormer on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property is an end-of-terrace two-storey dwelling located within a residential setting. The surrounding properties largely comprise of terraced dwellings and flatted blocks. Although loft conversions with the use of rooflights are apparent within the locality, there are no examples of other dormer

windows within the immediate area of the appeal site and the surrounding roof forms are relatively uniform in style and height. The proposed development includes the addition of a flat-roofed dormer on the rear elevation of the appeal property's roof.

6. Due to the location of the property at the end of a row of terraced dwellings, a side view of the proposed rear dormer would be visible from the public realm and therefore would have an impact upon the streetscene. Although, the proposed dormer would be smaller than the roof of the main house and would not appear as a full third storey, it would still constitute a large addition and would stand out as very large and bulky in comparison to the host dwelling's pitched roof. The design of the proposed dormer would not be 'uncommon practise' as suggested by the appellant and their efforts to find a suitable design alternative are noted. However, in this setting the dormer would be an incongruous addition to the appeal property and would appear out of keeping within the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposed dormer would have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area.
7. It is recognised that the proposal before me is smaller than that considered by the Council and it is closer to the size requirements in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 'Residential Alterations and Extensions' (July 2017). However, it still would not fully meet the requirements within the SPD. The appellant has suggested a condition regarding the use of materials, but this is not considered to be sufficient to make the overall proposal acceptable.
8. For the reasons above I consider that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and therefore would be contrary to Policies PMD2 and CSTP22 of the 'Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development' (December 2011), which seek to provide a high standard of design whilst also contributing positively to the character of the area, and the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed development would also be contrary to the SPD 'Residential Alterations and Extensions' as explained above and although these are guidelines only, I have not found any particular circumstances which would outweigh the guidance contained within this document.

Other Considerations

9. I note the appellant's statements regarding economic barriers, the affordability of the housing market in the area, and the view that the guidance within the SPD should be outweighed by the benefits of a loft conversion for its occupiers. However, planning is only concerned with land use in the public interest and therefore private matters cannot be given any weight.

Conclusions and Recommendation

10. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Emma Worby

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR