



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2019

by F Cullen BA(Hons) MSc DipTP MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/19/3229653

5 Mandeville Close, Guildford GU2 9YA

- 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 Steve Pateman against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/P/00106, dated 18 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'raising roof ridge and extension to the rear, creation of dormer at the back of the house, installation of 2no roof lights at the front and single to the rear over dormer, Juliet balcony to the rear dormer elevation.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council altered the description of proposed works to 'rear infill extension, raising of roof ridge and creation of dormer at the back of the house, installation of roof lights and Juliet balcony to rear dormer elevation.' This is also the description used by the appellant on the planning appeal form. I consider this to be a more accurate description of the proposed development. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.
3. I note that Guildford borough Local Plan: strategy and sites 2015 – 2034 (LPSS) (April 2019) has been adopted since the Council's decision notice was issued. I have therefore made my determination having regard to the LPSS and saved policies in Guildford Borough Local Plan (LP) (2003). Both main parties have had the opportunity to comment on the implications for the appeal and I am satisfied that no interested party has been prejudiced by this approach.
4. I am aware of an appeal against a refusal to grant planning permission for the 'raising of roof ridge and creation of rear dormer, 2 storey rear extension, installation of roof lights to front roof elevation and single rooflight on dormer' to No 7 Mandeville Close¹. Notwithstanding this, the appeals have been applied for separately and, as such, must be assessed on an individual basis. Therefore, for the avoidance of doubt, I will determine this appeal strictly with regard only to the evidence that is relevant to this appeal property.

¹ APP/Y3615/D/19/3236853

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:

- The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property, the street scene and the surrounding area; and
- The effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupants of No 7 Mandeville Close, with particular regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal property is located on the northern side of Mandeville Close within an established residential estate. It forms the right hand half of a pair of two storey, semi-detached houses constructed of red brick with pitched tiled roofs. It has an existing two storey extension to the rear.
7. The building is typical of the style and design of development in the immediately surrounding area, the street scene of which is generally characterised by uniform, evenly spaced pairs of semis and short terraced rows of houses that are set back from the street with a partially staggered building line. These characteristics and the lack of boundary treatment to the front of the properties, combine to give the street scene a strong rhythm and rather spacious feel.
8. Guidance within the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD) (2018) states that extensions or alterations should normally be consistent with the form, scale and style of the existing building. With regard to roof extensions and alterations it states that they must be carried out sympathetically to the existing dwelling and the immediate street scene. Furthermore, that any significant change to the height or form of a roof will not be acceptable and that dormer roof extensions should normally be subordinate features on the roof, be set down from the main ridge line and not occupy more than half the width or depth of the roof.
9. Taking into account the location and limited extent of the rear infill extension, I consider that this element of the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host property, the street scene and the surrounding area.
10. With regard to the extension and alteration of the roof, I acknowledge that the partially staggered building line means that the appeal property and the adjacent dwellings do not have an entirely consistent roof ridge line. However, I consider that they do have a generally consistent scale and roof ridge height. On this basis, raising the roof and altering the ridge line of No 5 Mandeville Close would significantly unbalance the symmetry of the semi-detached pair of houses and disrupt the continuity of the roofscape and the uniformity and rhythm of the buildings on the street scene.
11. I recognise the appellant's desire to create additional accommodation within this family home and note the presence of a variety of extensions to the rear of the properties on this side of Mandeville Close. However, there are no dormers present on any of the adjacent dwellings, and I consider that the substantial width and depth, flat roof form and poor quality design of the proposed dormer

would result in a top-heavy, unduly dominant and incongruous addition to the rear roof pitch that would be wholly out of keeping with the character and appearance of the host property and the neighbouring dwellings.

12. Notwithstanding the location of the proposal to the rear of the property and the existing screening, I consider that, taken together, the extension and alteration of the roof would be readily apparent and prominent when viewed from public routes around the appeal property. This would highlight the discordant nature of the proposal in relation to the character and appearance of the host property, the street scene and the surrounding area.
13. Having regard to all of the above, I conclude that the development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property, the street scene and the surrounding area. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with Policy D1 of the LPSS which, amongst other things, seeks that all new development will be designed to reflect the distinct local character of the area and will respond and reinforce locally distinct patterns of development. In addition, it would be contrary to Saved Policy H8(1 and 3) of the LP which, amongst other things, aims to prevent adverse and unacceptable effects on the scale and character of dwellings, their existing context and immediate surroundings. It would also not accord with guidance in the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD.

Living conditions of the occupants of No 7 Mandeville Close

14. Guidance within the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD states that it is important that any extension does not adversely affect the amenity of neighbours. This includes unacceptable impact on any neighbouring property in terms of loss of privacy and amenity, sunlight and daylight.
15. Taking into account the location of the rear infill extension, the increase in the height of the roof and the depth and bulk of the dormer addition, all in such close proximity to the shared boundary with No 7 Mandeville Close, I consider that the proposal would be an overbearing and oppressive structure when viewed from the closest first floor rear bedroom window and the conservatory of No 7 Mandeville Close. This would create an uncomfortable sense of enclosure and harm the outlook of the occupants of No 7 Mandeville Close.
16. Furthermore, notwithstanding that the elevation is north facing and as such receives a reduced level of light, it is evident that, when applying the 45 degree approach as outlined in the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD, the proposed development would cause an unacceptable degree of overshadowing to No 7 Mandeville Close. This would decrease the amount of light received in the closest first floor rear bedroom window and the conservatory even further. In this respect, it would have a detrimental impact on the living conditions of the occupants of No 7 Mandeville Close.
17. To conclude on this issue, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the living conditions of the occupants of No 7 Mandeville Close, with particular regard to outlook and light. This would conflict with Saved Policies G1(3) and H8(2) in the LP which, amongst other things, seek to protect the amenities of occupants of adjacent buildings. In addition, it would fail to comply with guidance provided in the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations SPD.

Other Matters

18. The appellant refers to other properties on adjacent streets which do not reflect the character and appearance of the area. I noted these buildings on site and, although they are nearby, the immediate context of these buildings is different to Mandeville Close. Furthermore, I am not aware of the detailed circumstances of these developments and in any event, I have determined the appeal before me on its own merits with regard to the specific context of the appeal property.
19. The appellant also highlights examples of flat-roofed dormer extensions to two semi-detached dwellings located within the Borough. I viewed these when on site and acknowledge that there are some similarities in relation to the appeal before me. However, the presence of apparently similar dormers does not provide justification to allow unacceptable development. I have considered this proposal on its own merits with regard to the specific context of the appeal property and found that it would cause harm.
20. The appellant asserts that, due to No 5 Mandeville Close having a very low roof construction height, the only way to create habitable accommodation that complies with building regulations is to raise the ridge height of the roof and that the additional space is proportionate to the size of the existing house. Be that as it may, these factors do not justify or outweigh the harm that I have identified.
21. I acknowledge that there were no objections to the proposal raised by any neighbours and the occupants of No 3 Mandeville Close were in support of the proposal. However, these are neutral considerations in the balance and do not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F Cullen

INSPECTOR