
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 September 2020

by James Taylor BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3630/D/20/3255045
15 Eastworth Road, Chertsey KT16 8DQ

- 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 Weston against the decision of Runnymede Borough Council.
 - The application Ref RU.20/0530, dated 14 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as an 'L-shaped Dormer Loft Conversion'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. Since the Council issued its Decision Notice, the Runnymede Borough Local Plan Second Alteration 2001 has been superseded by the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan, adopted July 2020 (LP). The Council have updated their position and the appellant has been given opportunity to comment in light of this material change in circumstances. I have proceeded to determine the appeal on the basis of the recently adopted LP.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey mid-terrace dwelling, located within a row of four houses of similar scale and proportions. To the north-west is a similar terrace of four houses. The gap between the two terraces provides vehicular access to the rear, including Stanway Cottages. Stanway Cottages front onto the rear parking/garaging and gardens of the terraced houses, including the appeal site.
5. The proposed dormer would introduce a substantial scale and mass to the little altered rear elevation of the host building. The simple form of the main roof and the subservient hipped roof form of the rear outrigger are clearly expressed and reflect good design. The proposal would project the built form beyond the plane of the main roof, both slopes of the outrigger's hipped roof and above the outrigger's ridge. Consequently, the proposal would fail to respect the existing form of the building and result in a dominant and

- incongruous addition that does not improve the character or quality of the area.
6. The rear of the terrace is not a prominent location and characterised by ancillary domestic features including garaging. However, the proposal would remain readily visible from Stanway Cottages and members of the public using the access to these properties. From such views, save for a few exceptions, the proposal would be seen in the context of the terraces' simple pitched roofs. The roofs positively contribute to the character and appearance at this point. The few existing dormer windows are limited to the main roofs and are not the same as the proposal before me. As such, they do not justify such a large and dominant addition.
 7. Details of the recently approved certificate of lawfulness¹ to erect a dormer to the main roof of the host building have been provided. I consider that this has a real prospect of occurring and, as such, I place substantial weight on it as a material fall-back position. However, even if this development were to occur the effect of the dormer over the outrigger would still result in additional harm. The projection, mass and scale of the dormer over the outrigger, despite it being lower than the dormer on the main roof, set further up from the eaves and clad in matching materials, would appear incongruous and fail to reflect good quality design. As such, the fallback position would be less harmful and does not justify the proposal before me.
 8. The appellant has referred to extensions at 8 Charles Street. However, I have not been provided with full details, note that it is not part of the same street scene, and that it is not identical to the proposal before me. As such, I afford this very limited weight. Furthermore, the other matters raised, such as the lack of additional reasons for refusal or public objection, and the improved accommodation for occupiers of the development are neutral considerations.
 9. Therefore, in conclusion on the main issue I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy EE1 of the LP, Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Council's Householder Guide, Supplementary Planning Guidance, July 2003. These policies and guidance seek amongst other aims to achieve high quality design, including the avoidance of dominant roof alterations. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
 10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

James Taylor

INSPECTOR

¹ LPA ref: RU.20/0529