

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 October 2021

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/21/3277337

6A High Street, Claygate, Esher KT10 0JG

- 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 Sidney Ross against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 2021/0846, dated 8 March 2021 was refused by notice dated 24 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as a retrospective application to retain the roof material as built.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the roof finish of the appeal building on the character and appearance of the Claygate Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The officer's report explains that the felt roof of the building is at odds with the grey slate tiles approved under planning permission reference 2018/2476. For the appellant it is explained that the building was constructed with a slate roof in accordance with the permission but because of leaks, the roof covering had to be replaced.
 4. I saw on my visit that there are a number of felt roof coverings in the locality, but these are on flat roofed outbuildings and dormers of a modest size. In contrast, the roof plane on the appeal building has an extensive area and its covering by felt is a finish that falls far short of what might be reasonably be expected for the appeal building and its location in the conservation area. Nor is there any evidence of a credible reason why a slate roof covering could not be installed that prevents water penetration into the building, provided the materials and construction of the eaves are of an appropriate standard.
 5. In my view therefore, the felt covering is harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The fact that there are few if any views of the roof from the public realm lessens the harm caused, but the preservation of the conservation area from harmful development requires an holistic approach that necessarily includes the impact on private views. And in this case I
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consider that a felt roof covering on this scale is noticeably detrimental to the aspect from the gardens and rear windows of Nos. 1-4 Sims Cottages.

6. For the above reasons I conclude that the felt roof would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Claygate Village Conservation Area. There would therefore be harmful conflict with Policies CS11 & CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011; Policies DM2 & DM12 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan 2015, and the Council's Design and Character SPD 2012.
7. Relevant Government policy in Section 16: 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' says that where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (in this case the conservation area), this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, I share the Council's view that the benefit in this case is primarily for the appellant rather than a public benefit that would outweigh the harm caused.
8. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR