



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 August 2022

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1ST September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/22/3299817

141 Farnham Road, Guildford, GU2 7RL

- 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 & Mrs S Cartwright against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/P/00420, dated 4 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as loft conversion to form habitable accommodation with rear dormer and rooflights to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion to form habitable accommodation with rear dormer and rooflights to front elevation at 141 Farnham Road, Guildford, GU2 7RL in accordance with the terms of the application, 22/P/00420, dated 4 March 2022 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and details: LP3876/01 and LP3876/02.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area, which includes the setting of the Onslow Village Conservation Area (OVCA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a row of detached two storey family houses. They are set back from and below Farnham Road by a narrow path and good sized front gardens, which are both enclosed by hedges and trees. As a result, the dwelling is largely screened from Farnham Road. The dwellings along this stretch of Farnham Road occupy an elevated position with their generous sized rear gardens sloping down to Abbot's Close. Abbot's Close is a narrow single

track road, which primarily provides rear access to properties in Farnham Road and Manor Way.

4. The appeal site sits just outside the Onslow Village Conservation Area (OVCA), whose boundary runs along the southern side of Abbot's Close. The OVCA comprises a large housing development whose layout, design and appearance follows that of the Garden City Movement. The layout, consistent design features and limited palette of materials together with the areas of open space, narrow roads and abundance of hedges, trees and soft planting all contribute to the character, appearance and significance of the OVCA.
5. The appeal dwelling comprises a detached two storey house with a small projection to the front and both single and two storey projections to the rear. It has a fully pitched asymmetrical roof and the fenestration on the rear elevation is varied in size, form and alignment.
6. The rear garden of the appeal property falls away from the dwelling and is separated from the property's pitched roof garage and parking area by a tall close boarded fence. The parking area is screened from Abbot's Close and the rear gardens beyond by a mature hedge. There are also outbuildings, tall fences, mature hedges and trees within the gardens and along the boundaries of the nearby dwellings on both sides of Abbot's Close.
7. Overall, due to the narrow width of Abbot's Close, the existence of rear garages, fences and the abundance of hedges and trees, views of the appeal dwelling from Abbot's close are extremely limited and restricted to partial glimpses. Whilst views of the rear of the appeal dwelling would increase in the winter months, they would nonetheless remain very restricted. Similarly, any views of the rear of the appeal dwelling from the dwellings which front onto Manor Road are restricted.
8. Amongst other things, paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), states that new development should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture; maintain a strong sense of place and add to the overall quality of the area. Policy G5 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (LP) and policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2019) (LPSS), similarly require new development to achieve high quality design. It should respond to the distinctive local landscape character and integrate into the existing landscape. LP Policy H8 states that domestic extensions should not have an adverse effect on the character of the host dwelling, or its context and immediate surroundings.
9. Section 1 of the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2018 (SPD), acknowledges that the borough is diverse in character and that the guidance within the SPD cannot reflect every individual situation. Section 3.3 of the SPD states that the roof of a dwelling has a major impact on the dwellings character and forms an important role within the street scene. Accordingly, roof extensions should be sympathetic to the existing dwelling and the immediate street scene. Dormer extensions should normally be positioned to the rear of the property and should be sympathetic to the existing roof and the host property as a whole. They should normally be subordinate to the roof, sit below the ridge line and occupy no more than half the width or depth of the roof. The proposed fenestration should reflect the proportions and style of the existing windows and normally align with the windows below.

10. The proposed extension would sit slightly below the highest roof ridge height. It would have a part flat and part hipped roof which would sit just within the ridge line and side hips of the existing roof, respecting the roof lines of the dwelling. The proposed dormer extension would occupy a recessed position behind the rear two storey projecting wing and would be clad in tiles to match the existing roof. As a result of these combined factors and notwithstanding its elevated position, the proposed dormer extension would respect and would be framed by and seen as an integral part of the existing main roof and recessed to the side of the existing rear projection.
11. The proposed dormer extension includes a small narrow single pane window and a larger three pane window. Although this larger window would be wider than the windows immediately below, it would be narrower than other first and ground floor rear openings. Also, the design and proportions of both windows would respect the proportions and style of the existing windows which have strong vertical lines. The proposed windows would sit below the eaves level of the flat roof of the dormer, which would be consistent with the existing first floor windows, which sit immediately below the eaves line of the main roof.
12. Overall, I find that the proposed dormer extension has been designed to respect and sit within the existing roof lines of the host dwelling. Given the asymmetrical design of the roof and the existence of a rear projecting wing, the design approach is logical. It ensures that the dormer extension would be readily assimilated into the existing roof form and would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. As stated above views of the appeal dwelling from the surrounding area are extremely limited and other than at the rear entrance to the property, are restricted to partial glimpses.
13. This includes in glimpses from within the OVCA, where the proposed roof extension would relate to a row of dwellings which are quite distinct in character and appearance to those within the OVCA. The proposed dormer extension would not be visible in views into the conservation area due to its siting in relation to Abbot's Close. For these reasons, the proposal would preserve the setting of the OVCA and would not result in any harm to its significance. Accordingly, the proposal accords with the requirements in Section 16 of the Framework, which seeks to ensure that proposals conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting, and do not result in harm to their significance. It is noted that the council share this view.
14. Finally, the council has suggested the imposition of conditions which require the use of matching external materials and adherence to the submitted drawings. These conditions are necessary to ensure that the development respects and blends in appropriately with the host dwelling and in the interests of certainty.
15. I conclude that the proposal would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling, its context and the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including the setting to the OVCA. Accordingly, it would comply with LP Policies G5 & H8, LPSS Policy D1, section 3.3 of the SPD and paragraph 130 of the Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR