



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 September 2022

by Juliet Rogers BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/W/22/3292111

58 and 60 Elmgrove Road, Weybridge KT13 8PD

- 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 Tim Crane and Mrs Karin Crane against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/3960, dated 15 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 11 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as a joined application for the erection of loft conversions, involving raised ridge, hip to gable conversion, erection of a rear dormer, installation of front roof lights and removal of chimneys, and replacement of tiles on front bay window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue of this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a pair of two storey, semi-detached properties. The area is characterised by similar building forms although some variations in materials, extensions, roofscapes additions and other alterations are evident in the streetscene. However, the appeal properties form part of a row of five semi-detached pairs with similar hipped rooflines.
4. The proposed hip to gable roof extensions on both properties would significantly alter the appearance of the front elevation, replacing the hipped roofline with a gable pitch. Whilst not located within a conservation area, nor close to a listed building, the resultant form would be of a scale and bulk that would dominate the roofscape of the existing properties and be prominent in the streetscene.
5. The proposed development would maintain the existing angle of the roof, although the height of the ridgeline on both properties would be increased. I acknowledge that this would result in the location of the highest point of the roof being set back further from the road and the height difference to nearby properties being less perceptible in close views. However, irrespective of the gaps in the building line or the semi-detached form of the appeal properties, it would be noticeable in longer views along the road.

6. Whilst the rear dormer windows would use materials to match the existing properties and be set in from the roof edges, their size and scale would dominate the rear roofscape by occupying much of the existing roof plane. Although of a contemporary design, the proposed dormers would be a bulky and incongruous form in the area.
7. I acknowledge that there are other examples of roof alterations in the area, including a hip to gable extension and hipped side dormers. However, as these are either at the end of a terraced row or on one side of a semi-detached pair and maintain the height of the ridgeline, their characteristics are materially different from the appeal scheme. Other rear dormers of a variety of design and scale are present within the surrounding area, including those which may have been constructed under permitted development rights. Notwithstanding this, their presence does not justify allowing further roof extensions that would harm the character and appearance of the area. Additionally, even if views of the proposed dormers would be limited from public areas, they would be visible from the rear gardens of nearby properties.
8. I conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to policies CS4 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy (2011) and Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan (2015). These policies, amongst other provisions, seek to ensure new development enhances the public realm and is designed to maintain local character.
9. In addition, it would not accord with the principles and guidance set out in the Council's Design and Character Supplementary Planning Document Companion Guide: Home Extensions (2012), Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide 2019. This guidance, amongst other things, seek to ensure development maintains, and is sympathetic to, local character.

Other Matters

10. My attention has been drawn to the prior permission¹ for a single storey rear extension on No 60. Whilst not implemented, I have no compelling evidence to indicate that it would not be constructed regardless of my decision. Nevertheless, given this development relates to only one of the appeal properties and comprises a single storey rear extension, it is of a lesser scale than the appeal proposal. As such, it would not give rise to the same harm as the appeal scheme.
11. I have also been referred to a nearby recent planning permission for a hip to gable roof extension on a semi-detached property on 4 Cedar Road (No 4) which, as I observed during my site visit, has now been constructed. Given the height of the ridgeline of No 4 has not been raised and its adjoining neighbour's roof has not been altered, this extension is not directly comparable to the appeal proposal. Nevertheless, it contributes to the character of the streetscene and the host property.
12. Even if I were to consider that the proposed development would not cause harm to the living conditions of occupiers of the appeal properties or neighbours, this would not weigh in favour of the appeal proposal.

¹ Ref 2017/1219

Conclusion

13. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

Juliet Rogers

INSPECTOR