

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 December 2022

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/22/3304089

22 Cottimore Crescent, Walton-on-Thames KT12 2DD

- 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 Grant Strydom against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application, Ref. 2022/0358, dated 6 February 2022 was refused by notice dated 19 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is a conversion of a loft into a bedroom with an ensuite shower.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the semi-detached pair of Nos. 22 & 24 and the streetscene of Cottimore Crescent.

Reasons

3. The appeal application relates to one half of a semi-detached pair of dwellings with the adjoining No. 24. As is the case with other nearby houses the pair have shallow hipped roofs, whilst the front elevation retains much of the symmetry of the buildings as originally built. The exceptions to this are the large front porch at No. 24 and replacement window frames in the host dwelling. Although houses in the Crescent display different designs, Nos. 22 & 24 have dwellings of a similar appearance to either side.
 4. The appeal scheme seeks to provide additional living space together with a shower room over most of the existing loft space. Because of the shallow pitch of the roof, this necessitates a large dormer across the full height and depth of the existing rear roof plane which would be increased in size by a hip to gable extension.
 5. Whilst I appreciate the improvement in living conditions that the proposal would bring, the appearance of the house at the rear would be dominated by the dormer which would fail to follow the Council's design guidance. The adverse impact would be accentuated by the inclusion of the full height glazed doors and the Juliet balcony. I consider both the disproportionately large size of the rear dormer to the roof plane and its detailing to be an example of a poor design,
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contrary to the Council's Home Extensions Companion Guide which forms part of the Design and Character SPD 2012.

6. Of more significance in terms of the main issue is the proposed hip to gable alteration and addition. This would unbalance the pair of semis with No. 24 and draw the eye as an inappropriate extension that runs counter to the pleasing effect of the existing symmetry I refer to in paragraph 3 above. The extension would be all the more noticeable because the pair of Nos. 22 & 24 are part of a run of five similar buildings that retain their original hipped roof profile.
7. For the appellant it is argued that there are other nearby examples of similar extensions including nearby at Nos. 32 & 117 Cottimore Crescent and No. 119 Cottimore Lane as mentioned in the officer's report. However, as the report explains, none of these were the result of an express grant of planning permission. And although four other such developments were cited in the grounds of appeal, nothing I have seen or read alters my view that the appeal scheme with its over-sized rear dormer is of a poor design. And in the particular setting of the appeal property the proposal would be harmful to the street scene, as well as to Nos. 22 & 24 as a pair.
8. For these reasons the development would be in harmful conflict with Policies CS3 & CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy 2011; Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Development Management Plan 2015, and with Government policy in Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.
9. For these reasons the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR