



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2023

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3615/D/23/3316842

95 Saffron Platt, Guildford, GU2 9XY

- 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 O Simmons against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/P/01880, dated 4 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as new roof with dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a new roof with dormers at 95 Saffron Platt, Guildford, GU2 9XY, in accordance with the terms of application Ref 22/P/01880, dated 4 November 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: Existing plans, elevations and location plan – Sheet 1 and Proposed plans, elevations and site plan – Sheet 2 Revision H
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the walls and roof of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building.
 - 4) The roof extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the first floor bathroom window has been fitted with obscure glazing and opening restrictors. Details of the type and nature of the opening restrictors shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and once installed the obscure glazing and restrictors shall be retained thereafter.

Preliminary matter

2. On 22 March 2023 the council adopted the Guildford Borough Council Local Plan: Development Management Policies (DMP), and the policies within it replaced many of the saved policies in the Guildford Borough Local Plan 2003 (LP). In particular, annex D of the DMP clarifies that LP Policies G1 & G5 have been replaced by a number of DMP Policies including D4 and D5. LP Policy H8 has been replaced by DMP Policy H4. These DMP Policies are all relevant to the reason for refusal. Both the council and the appellant have been given the opportunity to comment on the policies in the DMP and their relevance to the

appeal proposal. The comments received from the appellant have been taken into consideration. The appeal has been determined on this basis.

Main Issues

3. The first main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. The second main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of 93 and 97 Saffron Platt (No.93 & No.97), with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Saffron Platt is an irregular shaped crescent which is characterised by traditionally designed detached and semi-detached bungalows, dormer bungalows and two storey houses from a limited range of designs. They include front projections, bay windows and porches along with a mixture of hipped and gable roofs and catslide and half hip features.
5. Numerous dwellings in Saffron Platt and the adjacent roads have loft conversions which are served by a combination of side hip to gable extensions, front, side and rear dormer extensions and roof-lights. This includes side dormers on a number of dwellings in Saffron Platt and Worplesdon Road, some of which are similar in form and design to the appeal dwelling. Also, opposite the entrance to Saffron Platt are two pairs of semi-detached houses with shallow mono-pitched roof projections, which have the appearance of large side dormers.
6. The above features contribute to the current diverse roofscape and informality within the street scene. This is notwithstanding that some extensions were likely constructed within permitted development tolerances or prior to the adoption of the current Development Plan.
7. Together and amongst other things Section 11 and paragraph 130 of The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (the Framework), promote higher densities where appropriate and of making effective use of land to meet housing and other needs. New development should be designed to a high standard; sympathetic to local character; and safeguard the environment, whilst not preventing appropriate change.
8. Consistent with this, collectively policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015 -2034 (LPSS) and DMP policies D4 & H4 require new development to achieve high quality design that responds to distinctive local character. New development should respect the context, identity, scale, height, proportions, character, and materials of the host building and the surrounding area. It should not have an unacceptable impact upon adjacent buildings and the immediate surrounding area. DMP Policy D5 seeks to protect the living conditions of existing residents.
9. Reference has also been made to DMP Policy D7. Whilst this policy relates to visual impact it is focused on development within the public realm and so is not of specific relevance to the proposal.
10. The Guildford Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document – Residential Extensions and Alterations 2018 (SPD), advises that roof conversions can have a significant effect on the appearance of a dwelling and the street scene. Changes to the height or form of a roof will not normally be

acceptable in areas where roof pitches and heights within the street scene are consistent. Dormers should usually be restricted to the rear roof-slope and should be sympathetic to neighbouring dwellings. It also advises that extensions should not unacceptably impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties due to loss of privacy.

11. With the proposal the roof of the dwelling would be increased in height, resulting in a steeper pitch. Both the pitch and the height would respect the host dwelling and would be readily assimilated into the street scene.
12. A large dormer window would be introduced approximately mid-way along the westerly side roof-slope. It would sit below the ridge line, above the eaves line of the proposed roof and would be several metres from the front and rear elevations of the host dwelling. The proposed dormer walls and pitched roof would be clad in tiles to match the host dwelling and its crown top would be screened by the surrounding pitched roof. This design would be similar to the existing side roof dormer extension at 97 Saffron Platt, which has blended in with the street scene and is visually softer than some of the large flat roofed side dormers in the area.
13. The proposed side dormer would be largely screened from the street scene and the rear garden environment by the host dwelling, the adjacent dwelling at No.93 and the existing trees and shrubs within the front and rear gardens. As a consequence, any views of the proposed side dormer extension would be limited and insignificant. Where it could be seen, it would blend in readily with the existing street scene.
14. The proposed front dormer reflects the design of other small front dormer windows within Saffron Plat and would be set in from the ridge and sides of the main roof of the dwelling. It would appear well balanced within the roof-slope and between the matching front gable projections.
15. For these reasons, the proposal would respect the context, identity, scale, height, proportions, character and materials of the host building and the surrounding area. This is subject to adherence to the submitted drawings and the use of matching external materials which, as suggested by the council could be secured through the imposition of conditions. Although the proposed side dormer extension would not adhere precisely to the advice set out in the SPD, the SPD is worded to allow for exceptions and in this instance the proposal would comply with the overall objectives of the SPD.
16. I conclude on the first main issue that the proposal would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would comply with LPSS Policy D1, DMP Policies H4 & D4, the objectives of the SPD and paragraph 130 of the Framework.

Living conditions

17. The dwelling at No.93 has several ground floor windows and two doors that face towards the adjacent side elevation of the appeal dwelling and all but one of the windows are clear glazed. With the proposal two roof-lights and two windows in the proposed dormer extension would face towards the dwelling at No.93.
18. Due to the narrow width of the gap and the juxtaposition between the fenestration at No.93 and the proposed rooflights, along with the restrictions imposed by the skilling depths and heights within the proposed bedrooms, views from the roof-lights through the windows and doors at No.93 would be

restricted. Also, these roof-lights are secondary windows and the main outlook from these bedrooms would be from windows looking over the front and rear gardens of the appeal dwelling.

19. Similarly due to the close proximity and juxtaposition between the proposed dormer extension windows and the adjacent ground floor fenestration at No.93, views into the adjacent ground floor rooms at No.93 would be restricted.
20. For these reasons the proposal would not have a materially harmful impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of No.93.
21. The only ground floor window in the adjacent side elevation of the dwelling at No.97 has stained glazing and is thus obscure. As such the proposed roof-lights in the western roof-slope of the appeal dwelling would not result in any overlooking of the ground floor rooms at No.97.
22. No.97 also has two roof-lights in its easterly facing roof-slope. These are sited opposite the proposed bathroom and stairwell windows. The stairwell window is too high internally to have clear views towards No.93 and the bathroom window could easily be obscure glazed and have restricted opening. This is a matter that could be secured through the imposition of a condition. The other two roof-lights are sited at oblique angles to the rooflights at No.93 and so would not result in direct inter-looking.
23. For these reasons and subject to the bathroom window restrictions outlined above, the proposal would not result in a material loss of privacy for the occupiers of No.49.
24. I conclude on the second main issue that the proposal would not have a materially harmful impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of No.93 and No.97, due to loss of privacy. Accordingly, the proposal would comply with LPSS Policy D1, DMP Policies D4 & D5, the SPD and paragraph 130 of the Framework.

Conclusion

25. Having regard to the conclusions on both main issues and taking all other matters into account the appeal is allowed.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR