

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2024

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 April 2024

Appeal Reference: APP/Y3615/D/24/3337273

47 Denzil Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7NG

- 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. M. Jamieson against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application (reference 23/P/01546, dated 15 September 2023) was refused by notice dated 8 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as follows: *"Loft extension consisting of changing the roof shape to add a full rear dormer and raising the ridge height to accommodate a compliant second floor, solar panels and a mix of external and internal insulation to improve the building fabric whilst retaining the front of the house to preserve its architectural style"*.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located in an established area of Guildford and Denzil Road is characterised by Victorian houses with varying designs and sizes. The overall effect is pleasant and interesting, reflecting the history of the area.
4. Number 47 Denzil Road has a gabled two-storey elevation facing the road, with its main roof structure extending back from the frontage. It is an attractive building that has a positive impact on the surroundings, contributing to the quality and variety of the streetscene.
5. It is now proposed to carry out alterations and extensions to the house to increase and improve the accommodation. In particular, a new large dormer construction would be added to the traditional roof structure, retaining tiled roof slopes on the front part of the building but adding a box-shaped element on the rear part.

6. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (which was revised in December 2023) emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history (while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change). It is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities.
7. An emphasis on the importance of encouraging good design is also to be found in the Development Plan. Policy D1 of the 'Guildford Borough Local Plan: strategy and sites 2015-2034' (which was adopted in April 2019) and Policies H4 and D4 of the 'Guildford Borough Local Plan: Development Management Policies' (which was adopted in March 2023) are especially relevant. Planning policies that encourage good design also advise that new development should reflect local character.
8. The Council's 'Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document' (dated 2018) is also relevant but it does not have the force of the statutory Development Plan.
9. The proposed new roof structure would be set back from the front elevation of the building but it would still be very obvious in views along the road. The front part of the new dormer construction would be visible alongside and above the roof slopes of its neighbours and it would appear clumsy and out of keeping with both the existing host building and the traditional architecture of the streetscene in Denzil Road. It would dominate the existing building in an unattractive way and would spoil its appearance to a significant degree.
10. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed development would make a useful addition to the existing house. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the harm that would be done to the character and appearance of the existing house and to the surroundings outweighs the benefits of the project.
11. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with both national and local planning policies (including the Development Plan) and that it ought not to be allowed. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR