



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2024 by N Manley BA (Hons)

Decision by S Edwards BA MA MATCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/23/3330863

11 Minorca Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 8DU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Roberto and Mrs Layna Frontado against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2023/1513.
 - The development proposed is described as a "side and rear roof extension with increase in ridge height incorporating side rooflights."
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. The description of the proposed works detailed on the application form has been amended in subsequent documents. I have adopted the description used in the Council's decision notice, which reflects accurately and concisely the appeal proposal.
4. A new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2023. Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy as a material consideration, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.
5. The site lies in a conservation area, and I shall therefore have special regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Council's Officer's report refers to the appeal site as being situated within the Weybridge Conservation Area. In the interests of clarity, I shall however refer to the Weybridge Town Centre Conservation Area (WTCCA), which is the designation used in the Character Appraisal endorsed by the Council.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the WTCCA.

Reasons for the Recommendation

7. The Weybridge Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal (WTCCACA) describes the WTCCA as maintaining a rural ambiance despite its bustling town centre activity, mainly due to the prominence of the church and its surrounding churchyard. Situated amidst a medieval street layout, the WTCCA boasts a diverse array of well-maintained buildings spanning various architectural styles, mainly from the Georgian to Victorian and Edwardian eras, many of which retain their original features and detailing.
8. While some structures serve as residences, others have been repurposed for commercial use. In considering this appeal, I assert that the special interest of the WTCCA lies in its blend of residential properties and contrasting architectural designs, many of which are largely unaltered from their original size and form. Collectively, these contribute to a high-quality built environment which showcases a rich tapestry of historical housing styles.
9. The appeal site is a two-storey, semi-detached Edwardian property situated at the north eastern end of Minorca Road. The neighbouring residences along this street share a similar architectural style to the appeal site, retaining their original appearance since construction and preserving their Edwardian character. According to the WTCCACA, these unaltered paired Edwardian homes, which define the character and aesthetic of Minorca Road, hold heritage significance due to their original designs and detailing dating back to circa 1900. Therefore, these dwellings, which the appeal site forms part of, contribute positively to the significance of the WTCCA.
10. The proposal would see the height of the existing side and rear walls raised to support the addition of a new pitched roof. The proposal would be positioned set back from the property's front façade, extending to the rear elevation with the new addition noticeably taller than the existing roof. The proposal would be finished in matching materials to the existing dwelling with new rooflights incorporated into the roof.
11. The proposed enlargement of the roof would significantly increase the property's dimensions in both height and depth. Despite being set back from the frontage, the additional height of the proposal would result in a built form which would appear unduly prominent and dominant in relation to the host dwelling and neighbouring Edwardian properties. Given its position as the final property along its side of the road, this heightened and enlarged profile would be especially noticeable when viewing the property from the north, contributing to an increased sense of bulk and mass that would not align with the overall street scene, thus appearing as an incongruous addition.
12. Moreover, the raised roof and ridge would introduce a visually jarring element, starkly contrasting with the predominantly unchanged architectural style, designs, and consistent roof profiles of the paired Edwardian dwellings typical of Minorca Road. This new roof design would disrupt the largely unaltered and uniformity of the similar Edwardian dwellings. As a result, the proposal would

result in harm to the heritage significance of Minorca Road and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the WTCCA.

13. The appellant has referred to several other similar developments nearby. However, I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to these proposals being accepted and so cannot be sure they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal, including in respect of scale, location and development plans and policies. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits and very limited weight can be afforded to these examples.
14. The appeal scheme would cause unacceptable harm to the character, appearance, and historical significance of the appeal property, Minorca Road, and the WTCCA to which I ascribe considerable importance and weight. The proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the WTCCA. In such circumstances, paragraph 208 of the Framework states the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The proposed development would provide additional living accommodation but this would primarily benefit the occupiers of the appeal premises. Overall, there are no presented public benefits which would outweigh the identified harm.
15. Consequently, it would contravene Policies CS4 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy (adopted July 2011), which notably require development to be well-designed, integrate with and enhance local character and heritage assets, taking into consideration their historic context and any relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Additionally, it would conflict with Policies DM2 and DM12 of the Elmbridge Local Plan Development Management Plan (adopted April 2015), which collectively aim to ensure that development respects and preserves local character and enhances the historic environment.
16. Moreover, it would not align with the National Design Guide (2019), which emphasises the importance of well-designed development positively responding to local heritage and character. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to the Council's Companion Guide: Home Extensions Supplementary Planning Document, particularly Paragraph 1.10, which mandates that new development should harmonise with the streetscape and not dominate or overwhelm the existing or neighbouring properties.

Conclusion and Recommendation

17. The development would not accord with the Development Plan when it is considered as a whole. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Manley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

18. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's recommendation and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR