



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 August 2024

by B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16TH August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/24/3345761

7 Alton Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 3HN

- 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 Ben Doyle against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00170/HOU.
 - The development proposed is for the first-floor roofs to be connected to allow circulation of first floor space, two front dormers to be enlarged, and the garage converted into a studio.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the first-floor roofs to be connected to allow circulation of first floor space, two front dormers to be enlarged, and the garage converted into a studio at 7 Alton Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 3HN, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00170/HOU, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing numbers	Drawing names
GA.05	Location and Block Plan
GA.01 GA.02	Existing Floor Plans and Roof Existing Elevations and 3 D Views
GA.03 GA.04	Proposed Floor Plans and Roof Proposed Elevations and 3D Views

- 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Development (England) Order 2015, (or any order revoking or re-enacting this order with or without modification), no additional windows

or doors shall be constructed in the side elevation of the development hereby permitted at first floor level and above.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed roof alterations on the character and appearance of 7 Alton Road and the local area.

Reasons

3. The development would unify two presently independent roof spaces under a partly-flat roof, in order to provide additional living accommodation. The Council objects on grounds of the additional built mass, with the flat-roofed element being disproportionate and out of keeping with the host dwelling in scale and character, noting few other flat roofs in the locality.
4. The proposed roof alterations would not be readily visible in front views from Alton Road. Whilst two existing dormers would be enlarged and the existing garage converted as a studio, I do not consider that these changes would harm the overall appearance of the property nor be detrimental to the varied street scene.
5. At the rear, the main elevation currently appears as a conglomeration of pitched- and flat-roofed first floor elements of little architectural merit. The proposed new roof over the conjoined roof spaces would, in my view, represent an overall improvement in the appearance of the appeal building itself, despite its partly-flat profile.
6. The Appellant provides some evidence of other flat roofs in the vicinity but from inspection there are no readily noticeable flat-roofed extensions visible along this section of Alton Road, apart from several forward-standing domestic garages on the opposite side of the Road from the appeal site. There are also some flat-roofed back extensions visible from the rear of No 7.
7. Overall, I recognise no distinctive architectural style in the street scene and I do not think its character would be harmed by the development proposed. And I give weight in favour of the appeal to the benefit of the enhancement to the appearance of the rear of No 7.
8. For these reasons, I consider that the proposed development would accord with the requirement of Policy NBE9 of the adopted Hart Local Plan that all developments should seek to achieve a high quality design and positively contribute to the overall appearance of the local area. It would also comply with the provisions of saved Policy GEN1 of the Hart District Plan and Policy 10 of the made Fleet Neighbourhood Plan that proposals will be permitted where they are in keeping with the local character by virtue of their scale, design, massing, height, prominence, materials and layout. Both these provisions are consistent with national planning policy and the development is to be regarded as compliant with development plan as a whole.
9. I therefore conclude that this appeal should be allowed and the permission sought granted, subject only to the standard conditions set out above and one further restriction on additional windows in the side elevations of the new roof, to prevent the overlooking of neighbouring properties.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR