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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 February 2025

**by A Knight BA PG Dip MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 21 March 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/24/3353102**

**92 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton KT7 0UQ**

- 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 and Mrs Patel against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
  - The application Ref is 2024/1569.
  - The development proposed is Hip to Gable Roof Extension, Rear Dormer Roof Extension.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect that the proposed extension would have on the character and appearance of the host building and the wider area.

### Reasons

3. The appeal site (the site) is a semidetached property comprised of a disused shop unit and residential accommodation. Along with its attached neighbour, the site forms a prominent corner building (the building) at the junction of Thorkhill Road and Southville Road. The surrounding area is suburban with an Arts and Crafts-inspired style, including a predominance of pitched and gable-end roofs, traditional materials, and decorative finishes. These features combine to give the area consistency and charm.
4. The roof of the building comprises a fairly elaborate combination of pitched roofs and gable ends, providing a pleasing, ornamental quality which both adheres to and enhances the area. To the rear of the building is a single-storey garage block, wide and short enough that the rear roof slope of the building is on view from much of Southville Road. A flat-roofed dormer on the rear roof slope of the site is unsympathetic, but sufficiently modest as not to undermine the fundamental character of the building.
5. The appeal scheme includes a part hip-to-gable roof extension and the erection of a flat roofed, split-level rear dormer. Due to its size, the dormer would dominate the rear roof of the site and the building, harmfully overpowering its existing, traditional form. The flat roofs, by virtue of their width and depth, would have an incongruous appearance, strikingly at odds with the existing form. The introduction of a hip-to-gable extension would unbalance the building. Whilst that is not an uncommon feature locally, in this instance it would exacerbate the harmful effects of the dormer by adding bulk and overriding the simple elegance the building currently possesses.

6. The extensions would be visible along the eastern end of Southville Road, increasingly so as one nears the site. As experienced from the street, the appeal scheme would be at direct odds with the style and design of local buildings, and harmfully erode the extent to which the site adheres and contributes to its setting.
7. The appellant has drawn my attention to a significant number of properties nearby with varying forms of hip-to-gable and rear dormer roof extensions. These properties, including some to the immediate north of the site on Thorkhill Road, are semi-detached dwellinghouses with modest separation gaps to the sides.
8. Insofar as the cited examples contribute to the character of the area, they make gable-ended roof forms a common local feature. However, the modest gaps between, and back-to-back layout of, local housing largely prevents direct visibility of rear roof slopes from the street. As a result, any rear dormer extensions are generally not prominent from public vantage points, and certainly not to the extent that the appeal scheme would be from Southville Road as described above. Overall, I do not consider the cited examples to create a local character with which the appeal proposal would accord.
9. In addition, I do not find the cited examples to demonstrate inconsistent decision making. Firstly, as set out above, the impact of the appeal scheme would be different to that of most existing local roof dormers as it would be more prominent. Secondly, I am mindful that the General Permitted Development Order (2015) permits additions and or alterations to houses, of which the cited examples appear typical, without need of a planning application. I have no evidence that any of the cited examples required or obtained permission from the Council and no evidence, therefore, that it took an unusual approach in refusing the appeal scheme.
10. The proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the wider area, contrary to Policies CS8 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy (2011) and Policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Development Management Plan (2015) where they require new development to respond to positive features of individual locations and to preserve or enhance the character of the area.

## **Conclusion**

11. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. The appeal is dismissed.

*A Knight*

INSPECTOR