



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 April 2025

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/25/3363219

16 Twyford Close, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 1JU

- 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 Monga against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02474/HOU.
 - The development proposed is Loft conversion including installation of 2No roof-lights to the rear elevation, & 2No roof-lights to the front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion including installation of 2No roof-lights to the rear elevation, & 2No roof-lights to the front elevation at 16 Twyford Close, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 1JU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/02474/HOU, 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: Location Plan 1:1250; Existing Plans and Elevations LP4166; Proposed Plans and Elevations LP4166; Block Plan 1:500, and Block Plan 1:500 showing parking spaces.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on parking provision in the area and on highway safety.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey, mid terrace dwelling located in an area comprising mainly of semi-detached and terraced dwellings of a similar design and appearance as well as larger apartment buildings.
4. Policy INF3 of the Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 (2020) (HLP) advises amongst other matters, that development proposals should provide appropriate parking, in terms of amount, design and layout, in accordance with the Council's published parking standards, or as set out in Neighbourhood Plans. It also seeks to ensure that development proposals do not have a severe impact on the operation, safety or accessibility of the local or strategic highway network.

5. The proposal loft conversion would provide an additional bedroom, thereby resulting in a 4 bedroom property. However, one of the existing bedrooms is small and according to figures provided by the appellant, falls short of the nationally described space standards and the ground floor accommodation is also limited in size. Whilst raising no objection to the principle or design of the proposed loft conversion, the Council's concern is in relation to parking provision as they say the Council's Cycle and Car Parking in New Development Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (SPD) would require 3 allocated spaces and 0.5 unallocated spaces for a 4 bedroom dwelling.
6. The SPD confirms that the standards are neither a maximum or a minimum but are a guide to the appropriate quantum of parking to be provided. It therefore suggests to me that the standards should be applied with a degree of flexibility having regard to the circumstances of the site as well as other evidence such as a parking stress survey.
7. The dwelling has 2no. existing parking spaces, in a convenient and accessible location offset to the front of the dwelling. I observed on my site visit that there are various spaces throughout the development that appear to be unallocated, including parking bays within the road to the front of 2 Twyford Close, a short distance from the application property.
8. The appeal property is in a section of the road where there are fewer dwellings as it overlooks a recreation area and playground rather than other properties. The dwellings along this stretch of road are provided with off-road parking and the larger apartment buildings to the north and west of the site benefit from larger parking courtyards.
9. Whilst only a snapshot in time, at my site visit I observed that there was no evidence of widespread displaced parking in the local area. I am mindful that vehicle speeds in and around the area would be likely to be low and therefore any displaced parking that might take place would be unlikely to result in any severe impact on highway safety or be of such a scale that it would detract from the local environment or the enjoyment of pedestrians and cyclists.
10. I acknowledge that no substantive evidence has been provided in the form of a parking stress test or similar. However, owing to my observations regarding the particular circumstances of the site and surroundings, together with the limited size of the existing dwelling and the small-scale nature of the proposal involving only the conversion of existing roof space, on balance, I find that that the shortfall in parking is not sufficient reason, on its own, to justify dismissing the appeal.
11. I therefore find that the proposed development would not have a significant harmful effect on parking provision in the area or on highway safety and accordingly, the proposal would not be contrary to Policy INF3 of the HLP.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard implementation condition, the approved plans condition is imposed for certainty. A condition controlling the use of materials as suggested by the Council is not necessary as the proposal only involves the insertion of rooflights.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR