



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2025

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/25/3367047

Warehouse, Thames Street, Weybridge, KT13 8JG

- 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 Nick Jones against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0901.
The development proposed is described as single storey front porch extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by the appellant against the council and this is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary matters

3. The residential use of the appeal building is not disputed by the council in their decision notice or their delegated report. In their delegated report the council clearly identifies that the proposal is solely for the proposed porch. The appeal has been determined on this basis and any conflict or confusion between the main parties concerning other existing or proposed works to the building and permitted development rights, fall outside the scope of this appeal.
4. Prior approval and various planning permissions associated with the conversion of the appeal building have been granted and at the time of the appeal site visit various works to the property appeared to be taking place. At the time of my site visit the appeal site was secured and locked, although the full front elevation of the building and the position of the proposed porch were clearly visible through a gap in the front gates. It was also possible to assess the physical relationship between the existing building, the proposed porch, and the adjacent buildings from the street scene.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building, the street scene and the surrounding area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is located within a part of Thames Street that is characterised by small groups of similarly designed older and modern two/three storey attached and detached dwellings, which occupy a variety of sized plots. The depth of their front gardens varies and whilst some front building lines are similar, others are more diverse. There are numerous front projections and porches evident within the street scene, which have blended into the street scene with varied degrees of success.
7. The appellant has referred to extensions at 45 Thames Street (No.45), although they do not include a front porch extension and do not project forward of the front building line of the property. Whilst the flank wall of the two storey side extension is prominent within the street scene, it would have replaced the original flank wall and the proportions, detailing and materials used in this extension respect those of the host dwelling.
8. The appeal building comprises a large former warehouse building that occupies the full width of the plot and is materially taller and deeper than the surrounding dwellings. The appeal building is recessed towards the rear of the existing dwelling at No.45, which has a side extension with a crown roof. The appeal building also sits just behind the outer part of the single storey flat roofed extension to the front of the dwelling at 49 Thames Street (No.49). Notwithstanding this, due to its proximity, height, and mass the appeal building dominates the immediate setting to these dwellings and is a prominent feature within the street scene.
9. Together and amongst other things policy DM2 of the Elmbridge Development Management Plan 2015 (DMP) and Policies CS4 and CS17 of the Elmbridge Core Strategy (CS), state that proposals should be of high quality design. They should be based on an understanding of local character and integrate with and enhance local character. Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework), state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Proposals should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and add to the overall quality of the area. The National Design Guide 2019 (NDG) has similar objectives.
10. Due to its combined width, depth, height and design the proposed porch would be a prominent feature within the front garden and the street scene.
11. Collectively, due to its combined bulk, irregular shape and plain rendered side walls, the proposed porch would appear stark, incongruous and would detract from the symmetrical design of the front elevation of the host building. Although the roof of the proposed porch would reflect the height of the glazing bars on the front elevation of the host building, it would project above and beyond the flat roofed front extension at No.49. In view of their proximity to each other their relationship would appear awkward and unattractive.
12. For these reasons the proposed porch would materially harm the character and appearance of the host building, the street scene, and the area. This harm would clearly outweigh the benefits for the appellant and their family that would result from the proposal. Further, it is not a matter that could be satisfactorily addressed through the imposition of conditions.
13. As stated by the appellant, no objections were raised to the principle of a front porch as part of a planning application that was submitted in 2013. That application

was considered by the council prior to the adoption of the DMP and the current version of the Framework, which include policies relating to design and appearance. As stated in paragraph 48 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, planning law requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations dictate otherwise.

14. The 2013 decision is a material consideration, as are the numerous front projections and porches within the local area. This is because they highlight that porches can in principle be acceptable within the local environment. Indeed, both in its decision and delegated report the Council has not raised any objections in principle to a porch at the front of the appeal building. However, in this instance for the reasons set out in this decision I find that due to its siting, bulk, form, height, and appearance the proposed porch is not well designed and is unacceptable for this reason. Paragraph 139 of the Framework states that development that is not well designed should be refused.
15. I have taken into consideration current permitted development tolerances for porches, irrespective of whether or not the appeal property currently or in the future would benefit from such rights. Both in terms of height and floor area the proposal materially exceeds the permitted tolerances and so this is something to which I have given little weight.
16. I conclude on the main issue that the proposed porch would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host building and the street scene and the surrounding area. Accordingly, it conflicts with CS Policy CS17, DMP Policy DM2, paragraphs 131 & 135 of the Framework and the NDG.

Other matters

17. Although I note the other concerns expressed by the appellant regarding the handling of the appeal application, the contents of the council's delegated report and the time it took for various appeal decisions to be added to the council's public records, they are not material to the merits of the appeal proposal. As such they fall outside the scope of this planning appeal.
18. Regarding living conditions, the proposed porch would have solid walls on either side and would be located alongside a garage at No.1. For these reasons the proposal would not result in an unacceptable loss of light or privacy for the occupiers of that property. I acknowledge that the flank wall of the appeal building is dominant in the outlook from the dwelling and front garden at No.1. Although the proposal would increase the bulk of the appeal building and thus its dominance, it would be single storey and sited adjacent to the garage at No.1. For these reasons the increased mass of the appeal building would not amount to a reason for refusing this appeal. It does however add to my concerns relating to the overall visual impact of the proposed porch.

Conclusion

19. Having regard to my conclusion on the main issue and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR