



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2025

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/25/3369901

23 Feltham Avenue, East Molesey, KT8 9BJ

- 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 Malcolm Peebles against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0189.
 - The development proposed is a loft extension with rear dormer extension with natural tile cladding. Double glazed timber sash windows painted white and conservation style skylights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Malcolm Peebles against Elmbridge Borough Council, and this is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, with particular regard to its Conservation Area setting.

Reasons

3. No.23 is a semi-detached Victorian property located along an enclosed and tree-lined street. It forms part of the East Molesey (Kent Town) Conservation Area and is identified, together with its immediate neighbours, as a significant unlisted building, and makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.
4. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
5. There is a unity and rhythm to the group of semi-detached properties (Nos. 23-26), with two-storey projecting bays. To the rear, the properties have a simpler form, each with a gabled outrigger, which the appellant identifies as the dominant feature of the rear elevation. The proposed dormer window would sit above, disrupting the roofscape and creating an incongruous feature which is accentuated by its position, half-hipped form, and the fenestration, which do not reflect or align with the features and form of the existing property.

6. The box-style dormer would be inset from the flank elevation and marginally offset from the ridge line, finished with clay tiles to match the existing roof material. I am also aware that this is a revised scheme and has been reduced in size following a previous planning application. However, these elements do not significantly reduce its scale or roof coverage, nor do they lessen the break in cohesion of the group.
7. Due to its rear position, the proposed dormer would not be a notable addition in the street scene, although there would be some visibility through the gap to the side of the property, in which the flank elevation is visible in close proximity views. Notwithstanding this, the lack of visibility does not allow for poorly designed development. As the appellant's heritage statement recognises, how extensions assimilate into and relate to the original structure are part of the consideration. In my view, the scale and form of the dormer would undermine the composition and appearance of the host property and that of the group, which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to other developments within the vicinity. While other properties have clearly been renovated and adapted for modern living requirements, roof alterations are not a prevalent feature. Based on the information before me, the examples presented are not directly comparable. No. 8 does not have an outrigger, and the alterations to No. 16 were permitted some time ago. Moreover, I do not find that these limited additions have altered the prevailing character of Feltham Avenue. The properties in River Bank are different, and from my observations, where dormers are present, they are set significantly lower on the roof. Reference has also been made to appeal decisions elsewhere; however, each proposal is to be considered on its own merits and its particular context.
9. I agree with the Council that the insertion of the proposed rooflights would not be objectionable; nonetheless, the dormer addition would fail to harmonise with the host property and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
10. The impact of the development would be localised, and the effect on the Conservation Area as a whole would be less than substantial. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), great weight is to be given to the conservation of heritage assets irrespective of the level of harm. Whilst the proposal would increase the size of the property and include energy-efficiency improvements with associated economic and social benefits, these would be limited, and the alterations are primarily for the private benefit of the occupiers. There are no identified public benefits that would outweigh the harm.
11. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies DM2 and DM12 of the Development Management Plan 2015, and Core Strategy Policies CS7 and CS17. Together, these seek high-quality design which respects the local character and conserves the Borough's historic environment, taking opportunities to enhance the local character of the area and heritage assets. There would also be conflict with Section 16 of the Framework, regarding the protection of the historic environment and preserving features that contribute to the conservation area's significance.

Other Matters

12. I recognise that the alterations are to facilitate accommodation within the roof through increased head height, and that there will be limitations on how this can be achieved. There is also support for the development from the immediate

neighbours. These matters, however, do not alter my assessment of the proposal in relation to the development plan.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR