
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2025 by J Kirkaldy BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

Decision by Joanna Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M1595/D/25/3367904

117 Hill House Drive, Chadwell St. Mary, Thurrock RM16 4DS

- 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 Igor against the decision of Thurrock Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00280/HHA.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension with three side-facing dormer windows and two rooflights.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.
4. The Council appears to raise no objection to the proposed two roof lights on the rear roof slope of the dwelling. I too find this element of the proposal acceptable as rooflights would not be incongruous features within the street scene or harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is a two storey end of terraced dwelling situated in a prominent corner position on Hill House Drive. The surrounding area is residential in character with a mix of house types of a similar architectural style.
6. The proposed development would replace three existing rooflights with three dormers positioned on the street facing front roof slope. Given their height, width and overall dimensions, the proposed dormers would occupy a significant proportion of the roof and would align with the existing ridge height. Consequently, this would result in a top-heavy and bulky appearance, with the dormers appearing as dominant features that would fail to assimilate well with the character and appearance of the original dwelling. Furthermore, although the positioning of the dormers would be symmetrical with the existing first floor windows below, they would be unequally spaced within the roof slope, appearing as unbalanced additions.

7. The roofscape of the surrounding residential estate is characterised by pitched roofs with some sporadic roof lights. It remains largely unaltered by the presence of dormer windows. Therefore, the proposal would introduce an incongruous feature that would disrupt the presently unchanged roof profiles of the appeal dwelling and the surrounding dwellings.
8. The appellant has stated that the dormers would enhance usability of the attic floor space by improving headroom, light and ventilation to create additional habitable accommodation and has submitted sections illustrating the head height that could be achieved. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would optimise use of the roof space it does not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the appeal property and wider area, and I therefore give it only limited weight in my decision.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to examples of roof alterations, suggesting that roof alterations, including dormers are an accepted feature. Regarding the examples, these are not directly comparable. The approved scheme at 55 Hill House Drive does not involve dormer windows, while the approved scheme at 31 Hill House Drive is for a rear dormer rather than front dormers. The approved scheme at 1 Rutledge Close is not within the same context as the appeal scheme, while it is unclear if the housing at Oak Grove was purpose built with front dormers. In terms of the appeal decision for 47 Ridgewell Close, this scheme is not in the same local authority and was not determined against the same local policy.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. This would conflict with Policies CSTP22 and PMD2 of the Thurrock Council Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (as amended) (2015) which seek development of a high quality design that contributes positively to the character of the area in which it is proposed. It would also conflict with the Thurrock Council Design Guide Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2017) which states that roof additions will only be acceptable where high quality design is employed and where additions are in scale with the existing roof and do not spoil the existing roof form. Furthermore, it would be contrary to chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of achieving well-designed places.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Kirkaldy

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Joanna Gilbert

INSPECTOR