



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2025

by H Miles BA (hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/D/25/3374588

16 Cumberland Drive, Esher, Surrey KT10 0BB

- 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 Williams against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/1330.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing side garage, rear utility and first floor dormer (previous extension); proposed new two-storey side extension with a hip to gable style loft conversion.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The houses along Cumberland Drive differ in their detailing, but they share features including their 2 storey height, detached character, generally with hipped, pitched roofs with some cat slide roof features. This results in a coherent appearance to the houses and a clear sense of separation between the buildings, particularly at first floor and above.
4. Many of the properties have been extended, several at roof level, including side and rear dormers. My attention is drawn to nos 7, 9, 14, 20, 24, 26 and 42. Many of these include what appear to be two storey side additions with a part pitched, part flat roof, and some have side dormers. Generally, these appear subservient to the main dwellings with the roofscape of the host dwelling and separation at roof level suitably retained. No 15 has been extended with a first floor above its garage and a gable end roof above, similar to part of the appeal scheme, and this forms part of the streetscene. Nevertheless, I am not provided with details that the circumstances for that permission are similar to those before me now. Moreover, the appearance of this single property is not so common as to be an overriding part of the character and appearance of this area.
5. Overall, considering the character of the area including the properties above, the harmonious and spacious appearance of the dwellings in this area results in an open and attractive character to the houses and the streetscene.
6. The appeal scheme includes a two storey side extension plus an extended roof which would stretch for the full width of the property including above the extended

side addition. The roof would be further enlarged with gable end features with a small barn hip to each end, as well as a rear dormer. The dormer would be set back from the sides of the roof with quadruple full height glazed doors, with cladding above and around and a flat roof.

7. These additions would significantly increase the bulk and massing to the roofscape. They would also erode the gaps between the buildings, particularly at roof level which would harmfully undermine the separation between houses. The dormer would be large, with windows which do not respond well to the position of existing fenestration and a large amount of cladding. This would result in further visually jarring bulk at roof level. The house would be more symmetrical, however this would be at odds with the character of the existing building and similar houses nearby. The proposal would be in materials to match the existing building and would not increase the ridge height or change the density or building lines. Albeit the lack of harm in these regards would be a neutral factor. Overall, the proposed development would not maintain the style and appearance of the existing building, would dominate the roofscape in the streetscene and would harmfully erode the spacious and coherent character in this area.
8. Extensions, including roof extensions, may be possible under permitted development rights. However, I do not have evidence that satisfies me that extensions of the scale and type proposed here would be possible, nor, taking into account my conclusions that the appeal proposals would be harmful to character and appearance, that they would be more harmful in this regard.
9. There have been previous applications for similar works, and I understand that alterations have been made from these refused schemes. However, these applications are not before me, and I have assessed this appeal on its merits.
10. Therefore, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would be contrary to Policy CS17 of the Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM2 of the Development Management Plan 2015. Together these require high quality design from all new development and set out specific principles and attributes to be taken into account.

Other Matters

11. The Council has not identified harm with regard to surface water drainage, water usage or the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Based on the evidence with this appeal I have no reason to disagree with these conclusions. However, the absence of harm in these matters does not weigh in favour of the appeal scheme.
12. The proposed development would extend the property with an additional bathroom and two studies. This would provide more space for the existing occupiers and improved their living standards. However, it would mainly be a private benefit for the existing occupiers. On the other hand, the creation of high quality buildings is fundamental to what the planning process should achieve and as such this would not outweigh the public and permanent harm to character and appearance.

Conclusion

13. 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. Therefore, for the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

H Miles

INSPECTOR