



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2026

by **S F Barnes MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/L2250/W/25/3373682

Flat C, 31 Kingsnorth Gardens, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2QP

- 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 Ruben Douglas against the decision of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/1263/FH.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion consisting of a hip-to-gable roof and rear dormer.
-

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 surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site contains a semi-detached property, set within an established residential area. The appeal building is subdivided into flats over its 3 storeys of accommodation. The proposal relates to the loft level flat. The design and massing of the building is broadly symmetrical to its semi-detached counterpart, 30 Kingsnorth Gardens. The buildings share a hipped roof form, front gable feature, and both rear dormer and side dormer windows of a comparable scale.
4. Properties on Kingsnorth Gardens are generally consistent in their scale, design and hipped roofs with distinctive front gable features. However, the 2 properties that adjoin either side of this pair feature contrasting roof forms, including gabled and barn-hipped styles. As a result, this part of the streetscene has some degree of variety in terms of roof form. At my site visit, I observed some examples of modestly-sized rear dormer windows at neighbouring properties, which were similar in scale to those at the appeal building and No.30.
5. The Council considers the roof extension forming a gable-end and the installation of rooflights to be acceptable, subject to suggested conditions regarding detailed design. Given the particular context of the appeal building, I agree with its conclusions in those respects.
6. While the Council identifies that the principle of replacing the existing dormer is acceptable, the dormer window as proposed would occupy a substantial proportion of the rear roof slope. Although it would not occupy more than half of the width of that slope and would be set away from the edges and eaves, its pitched roof would

extend to the main ridge resulting in a significant overall height. Due to its scale, the dormer would dominate the roof slope, disrupting the harmonious symmetry with the scale and design of the rear dormer window at No.30. The large picture window would emphasise this imbalance. Overall, the proposal would result in an incongruous and top-heavy appearance in its context.

7. The use of matching materials, and the careful design and alignment of the lower pair of windows, would not overcome this harm. Moreover, unlike the proposed dormer window, the existing outrigger is well set down from the main ridge and, through its proportions, maintains a subordinate relationship to the building. As such, this does not provide a convincing justification for the proposal.
8. Concluding on this main issue, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with the provisions of Policies HB1 and HB8 of the Folkestone and Hythe District Places and Policies Local Plan (adopted September 2020). Those policies, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that proposals respect existing buildings and that dormer windows maintain the overall proportions of the building. It would also be contrary to the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework that seek to ensure developments are sympathetic to local character and surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

9. Interested parties raised concerns regarding construction noise and disturbance, potential structural damage, drainage issues, and future legal and insurance costs. The Council considered those matters and has raised no objection in those respects. I find no compelling reason to disagree with its conclusions.
10. The appellant wishes to enhance the living accommodation provided at the appeal property. However, as a largely private benefit this carries only limited weight. Additionally, even if the proposal were consistent with permitted development rights applying to single houses, this appeal relates to a flat and does not benefit from such rights. Accordingly, this factor also carries very limited weight.
11. The site is not within a conservation area. However, this has not led me to an alternative conclusion on the main issue. The Council found no harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, nor to parking provision. Nevertheless, the absence of harm in these respects carries neutral weight in my consideration, as this would be expected of any proposed development.
12. The appellant has explained that the scheme follows pre-application advice and that they tried to engage with the Council prior to it issuing its decision. However, I must consider the appeal on its own merits. These matters have not led me to an alternative conclusion on the main issue, which I have reached based on all of the evidence before me.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan when taken as a whole. The material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S F Barnes INSPECTOR