Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2026

by S F Barnes MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 May 2026

Appeal Ref: 6003953
4 The Green, Old Guildford Road, Broadbridge Heath, West Sussex RH12 3JY

- 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 Mrs Rebecca Charnock against the decision of Horsham District Council.
- The application Ref is DC/25/1862.
- The development was described on the application form as: Proposed Rear Loft Dormer Extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I saw at my site visit that the development has already been carried out as shown in the submitted plans. Planning permission is therefore sought on a retrospective basis. For clarity, my assessment is based on the submitted plans.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site contains a linked-detached dwelling set within a garden plot. It forms part of a row of dwellings with a similar 2-storey scale which front onto The Green. Pitched roofs with front gable features are the predominant roof forms in the surrounding streetscene, despite variation in the style of buildings. Where dormers are visible in the streetscene, they are generally set away from the outer edges of the roof and occupy only part of a roofslope.

5. The Council granted planning permission (Application Ref DC/25/0947) for a scheme of extensions to the front, side and roof of the appeal building. In that approved scheme, the submitted plans indicate the appeal building would have front and rear roof slopes separated by a section of flat roof, as well as two front gable features.

6. The appeal development is a modified version of the approved scheme. It incorporates a flat-roof rear dormer window across the full width of the rear elevation, instead of the approved rear roof slope with rooflights. The dormer window's tall side walls and flat roof can be seen from the street at The Green and in glimpses between buildings on Warnham Road, where they appear in marked contrast to the pitched roofs on adjoining buildings, resulting in harm.

7. At the rear, the development's height and flat roof adds bulky additional mass that has an unduly dominant effect on the appeal building's appearance. This design results in an alien roof form with no legible slope to the rear of the roof. Despite being an addition to the rear of the building, its visual presence is nonetheless appreciated in views from the streetscene as identified above, as well as in private views from neighbouring properties. Accordingly, its siting does not justify the failure to achieve a high standard of design, particularly given the harm identified.

8. The development is finished in vertical weatherboarding so that it appears as a continuation of the mass of the approved side extension, which is also clad in this material. Rather than providing visual relief from the red brick used at the lower parts of the rear elevation, the vertical lines of the weatherboarding emphasise the development's height and contribute to its unacceptable, top-heavy appearance.

9. For these reasons, the development has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. This is contrary to Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) (2015). Amongst other things, those policies seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development is of a high standard of design and layout and relates sympathetically with the built surroundings.

Other Matters

10. The appellant has set out that a roof extension of an alternative design which would result in a similar scale, massing and visual presence could be built using Permitted Development Rights (PDRs). It is contended that the harm arising from the development would remain in that fallback scenario.

11. Whilst the evidence indicates that the additional volume resulting from the appeal development may be within the relevant limits of Class B[1], to benefit from those PDRs other criteria would need to be met too. Those include retaining a set-back from the original eaves of the roof, so far as practicable. Consequently, a development which could be built under PDRs would likely be smaller in scale and more subordinate in appearance compared to the appeal development. As there is no convincing evidence before me to demonstrate that an equally or more harmful scheme could reasonably be implemented under PDRs, this factor does not outweigh the harm I have identified.

12. The development provides additional accommodation for the appellant and their family. The appellant has described crowded conditions and explained that existing spaces within the dwelling were unsuitable for use as bedspace. In contrast to the approved scheme, the development provides such a bedspace in the loft. Whilst I recognise the importance of these matters to the appellant, this is nonetheless experienced largely as a private benefit for occupiers of the dwelling. Moreover, I am not convinced that a similar benefit could not be realised through a less harmful or alternative design. Accordingly, this matter carries limited weight in favour of the appeal.

13. There is no dispute that the site is within a defined settlement boundary, nor that it is not subject to any statutory landscape, heritage or environmental designation. In addition, the Council identified no harm to living conditions for neighbouring occupiers, including by way of overlooking. However, the absence of harm in these

[1] Under Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

respects does not amount to a benefit and these matters weigh neither for nor against the appeal.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, 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, the appeal should be dismissed.

S F Barnes

INSPECTOR