The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by David Cross BA (Hons), PGDip, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 28 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/16/3155994
22 Cole Park Road, Twickenham, Richmond upon Thames TW1 1HW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Sam Nazer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
- The application Ref 15/4846/HOT, dated 19 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2016.
- The development proposed is ground floor / double storey side addition / change to rear bay first storey window porch extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with a hipped roof. The dwellings are largely unaltered at first floor level and above, and have therefore retained their sense of symmetry. Cole Park Road is an attractive suburban street with a leafy character and contains substantial dwellings of varying design.

4. A significant element of the proposal is a two storey extension to the side. This would replicate the hipped roof of the main building, but the extension would be stepped back from the front elevation and the roof would be set lower than the ridge of the main roof. The step-back from the adjacent front elevation would be less than the 1 metre recommended in the Council's House Extensions and External Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2015 (SPD). However, the front elevation of the property already includes a step-back, and the cumulative step-back of the proposed extension would exceed that advised in the SPD.

5. Due to the step-back and design of the roof, the majority of the two storey side extension would appear as subservient to the host dwelling. Although this would affect the symmetry of the pair of semi-detached dwellings, this would not appear as unduly incongruous within the street scene due to the

subservient nature of the extension and the variety of designs of dwelling in the area.

6. However, the first floor extension would project beyond the rear elevation of the host dwelling in the form of a flat roofed offshoot. This would increase the bulk and massing of the flank wall of the development at first floor level and would appear as an unduly dominant addition projecting to the rear of the host dwelling. The flat roofed design would also appear as an angular and unsympathetic addition to the property.

7. The appeal dwelling is located at an angle to the neighbouring detached property of 24 Cole Park Road and is adjacent to a bend in the road. It was apparent at my site visit that, due to this arrangement, the two storey extension to the rear would be readily visible from Cole Park Road and from No 24 and would appear as an intrusive and overdominant element of the proposal extending to the side and rear of the property. The impact on No 24 would be exacerbated as, due to the angle of the dwellings, the separation distance narrows to the rear.

8. The porch extension to the front would include high level glazing of a modern design extending across much of the front elevation. To some degree, the horizontal emphasis of this glazing reflects a pitched roof extending above the porch and garage of the neighbouring semi-detached property of 20 Cole Park Road. However, the design and use of materials of the roof to the front of No 20 is sympathetic to the character of the property. In comparison, the modern angular design of the proposed glazing to the front of the appeal site would appear as a stark and unsympathetic addition which would be at odds with the appearance of the host property and No 20. This visual impact would be increased due to the location of the property on a bend in the road which would mean that the front elevation would be readily visible in views along Cole Park Road from the north east.

9. The proposed ground floor extensions would significantly increase the footprint of the dwelling. However, sufficient amenity space would be retained around the dwelling to ensure that this does not represent overdevelopment of the site. Furthermore, the ground floor extensions would not be readily visible from the surrounding area and would not detract from the character of the property or the wider street scene.

10. The council has expressed concern about the effect on the gap at first floor level between the appeal dwelling and the detached dwelling of No 24. Due to the location of the property on a bend in the road, this gap is visible in views from Cole Park Road from the north east and enables views of trees to the rear of the site. However, whilst the gap would be reduced, a significant gap between the properties would be retained and the trees to the rear would still be visible. Furthermore, the separation distance of the proposal from the side boundary would exceed the 1 metre advised by the SPD and would not result in the terracing effect which the SPD seeks to avoid.

11. In support of the appeal, my attention has been drawn to other two storey side extensions in the area. However, I saw that these were extensions to detached dwellings and are therefore materially different from the current appeal proposal. In any case, I have determined the appeal on its own merits.

12. Notwithstanding my conclusions in relation to the two-storey side extension, the gap between properties and the footprint of the development; I conclude that the design of the flat roofed two storey extension to the rear and the porch extension would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the of the existing building and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policy CP7 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames (LBRUT) Core Strategy 2009 and Policies DC1 and DC5 of the LBRUT Development Management Plan 2011. These policies state that development should be of a high design quality, recognise local character and protect adjoining properties from visual intrusion. These policies are broadly consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to secure high quality design.

13. The proposal would also not comply with the advice of the SPD which states that extensions should reflect existing character and detail and complement existing dwellings and the neighbourhood.

Other Matters

14. Part of the ground floor extension to the rear would be located hard against the boundary with 20 Cole Park Road and I am mindful that an objection has been submitted on behalf of the resident of No 20 raising issues of loss of light and outlook. Although the extension would be visible from the rear of No 20, I consider that due to the arrangement of the properties and the limited projection of the ground floor extension, the proposal would not be unduly detrimental to the living conditions of residents of No 20, either as a result of loss of light or outlook.

15. The issue of the impact on property values has also been raised. It is a well-founded principle that the planning system does not exist to protect private interests such as the value of land or property.

16. I note the frustrations expressed by the appellant in relation to the advice given by the Council leading up to this appeal. However, this is not a matter for this appeal which I have determined on its planning merits.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR