
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 October 2016

by Amanda Blicq BSc (Hons) MA CMLI

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

Decision date: 4th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5630/D/16/3154859

61 Aragon Road, Kingston upon Thames KT2 5QB

- 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 Simon Kelly against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 16/12480/HOU, dated 4 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of part single, part two storey side/rear extensions. Erection of front porch extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. For brevity I have used the description of the development given on the decision notice and appeal questionnaire in the heading above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area, with particular regard to the Tudor Estate Local Area of Special Character (LASC).

Reasons

4. The appeal property (No 61) is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling situated within an estate of predominantly semi-detached and link C20 dwellings. The dwellings within the LASC have some consistency of design, with a distinctive roofscape featuring side hipped roofs, and part-timbered front elevations with repeating patterns of gablets and oriel windows. Notwithstanding that a proportion of the dwellings in the area have undergone some alteration, the features identified above give an underlying consistency to the area.
5. The Council notes that the area lies within the LASC; this is a local character designation from the Character Study¹.
6. Number 61 is an inner dwelling of a pair of semi-detached houses situated on a prominent corner plot. It has already undergone alterations comprising the replacement of the original hipped roof with an extended ridgeline and side gable. This contrasts with the roof form of the attached (No 63) and

¹ Royal Borough of Kingston, Borough Character Study, January 2011

neighbouring dwellings (No 59), both of which have retained a side hipped roof above two-storey side extensions. Given the site's prominence in the street scene, the contrasting roof forms of side-hipped and side gable demonstrated by Nos 59 and 61 are particularly noticeable. However, I noted on my visit that this is not an uncommon juxtaposition of roof forms on the estate.

7. The development would comprise a two-storey side extension with a half-hipped roof built off the existing ridge which would introduce a new roof form into the estate which would be out of keeping with its immediate neighbours. Although I appreciate that there would be an upper section of hipped roof, the eaves height of the side elevation would be higher than that of No 59, alongside which it would be directly viewed. In addition, the proximity of the development to the hipped roof of No 59 would accentuate that difference in form.
8. The close juxtaposition of differing roof forms on a prominent site would disrupt the distinctive roofscape and result in an unbalanced appearance between the opposing dwellings. The appellant states that the half-hipped roof would not harmfully disrupt the rhythm of the street scene but I disagree with the appellant in this respect, as the estate's underlying design consistency is what contributes to its architectural coherence.
9. Furthermore, the designation of the LASC indicates that the Council considers the Tudor Estate to have retained sufficient architectural consistency to warrant additional consideration in decision making. The evidence before me indicates that the Character Study found that much of the loss of character and identity within the LASC stemmed from small householder-led development, suggesting that in some cases, a more focussed and design-led approach is required. As such, Policy DM 12 of the Core Strategy² (CS) aims to preserve or enhance the Borough's assets through the promotion of high-quality design and a focus on heritage-led regeneration.
10. I appreciate that there are differences in the roof form of the four dwellings situated on this corner site, but as noted above, Nos 59 and 63 have side hipped roofs. Although 57 Aragon Road has a flat roofed side extension, the flat roof reduces bulk above first floor level and in any case this extension is adjacent to the road, rather than another dwelling.
11. I also acknowledge that there is evidence of other alterations within the LASC that are unsympathetic to its underlying architectural coherence. However, I have no evidence before me to indicate the planning context under which such alterations were permitted. In any case, each appeal is determined on its own merits and precedence does not necessarily warrant perpetuating a situation that would result in harm.
12. CS Policy DM10 outlines the design requirements for new development including house extensions, and states that the most essential elements contributing to the character and local distinctiveness are required to be respected, maintained or enhanced. Relevant features include the prevailing development typology, scale, layout and roof form. The Residential Design Guide³ (SPD) also notes that side extensions should be set back from the front

² Royal Borough of Kingston Core Strategy, 2012

³ Royal Borough of Kingston Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, November 2013

elevations of the host dwelling and also set down with respect to the ridgeline; the appeal before me would fail to conform with those guidelines.

13. The appellant has provided evidence of a fall-back scheme⁴ which would have a gablet and partially hipped side roof. This would to some extent reflect the side roof form of both No 59 and No 63, as well as the gablets on their front elevations. However, the site's planning history indicates that there have been five planning applications for side and rear extensions submitted since 2013. Subsequent to the permission granted for the fall-back scheme, a further application was submitted and refused in addition to the appeal now before me. The evidence before me also indicates that the fall-back scheme would have significantly less first floor area than the current appeal. Consequently, I am not satisfied that the extant permission is reasonably likely to be implemented and as such, I give the fall-back scheme little weight.
14. In the light of the above, I conclude that the development would detract from the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. It would not respect, maintain or enhance the prevailing roof form and would therefore be contrary to CS Policy DM10 as outlined above and the guidelines within the SPD. It would also fail to respect features of local importance through a consideration of form and detailed design and would therefore be contrary to the CS Policy DM12, also as outlined above.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and taking all matters into account, I conclude that the development would be contrary to the relevant policies of the Council's Core Strategy and that therefore the appeal should be dismissed.

Amanda Blicq

INSPECTOR

⁴ Ref 13/12716/HOU