
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2016

by John L Gray DipArch MSc Registered Architect

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

Decision date: 5 December 2016

Appeal Ref. APP/L5810/D/16/3160442
21 Alder Road, London, SW14 8ER

- 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 Vinay Vishwanath against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
 - The application, ref. 16/3047/HOT, dated 28 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is the construction of new ground floor and first floor rear extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed. Planning permission is granted for the construction of new ground floor and first floor rear extensions at 21 Alder Road, London, SW14 8ER, in accordance with the terms of the application, ref. 16/3047/HOT, dated 28 July 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) the development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision;
 - 2) the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 16-008-01 (sheets 1-5) and 16-008-04A (sheets 1-5);
 - 3) the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in materials matching those used in the existing building;
 - 4) development shall not begin before details of all proposed windows and roof windows have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority; the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in the appeal is the effect the proposed extensions would have on the character and appearance of no. 21, which is a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM), and of the Mortlake Conservation Area, within which it stands.

Reasons

3. No. 21 is the most northerly house of three pairs of semi-detached houses at the southern end of Alder Road. At the front, they remain effectively identical, very attractively designed and well worthy of their status as BTMs. Their rears are not so easily seen, the ground floors in particular being screened by rear garden fences. The first floors, however, are visible from the south-east from North Worple Way and the railway line. From there, because the various
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ground floor extensions are not visible (at least not from North Worple Way) the rears of the six houses seem to retain their original appearance, as they do at the front.

4. The Council has no objection to the proposed ground floor extension. That is not surprising, given the size and variety of existing ground floor extensions (not readily visible from ground level in North Worple Way and Wrights Walk) and there can be no disputing the Council's stance. It is more concerned, as befits the status of the houses as BTMs in a Conservation Area, about what would be visible from public viewpoints.
5. All six houses have 2-storeyed gabled off-shots at the rear, extending around 3.0m from the main rear walls. The appeal proposal is to extend that off-shot by a further 1.8m or so, retaining the span and profile of the existing building, inserting a new window at the angle with the rear wall and also introducing two roof windows in each pitch. A modest extension such as this, executed in materials and detailing to match the existing house, would hardly detract at all from the character and appearance of the six houses. Their original form and profile would remain readily understood, even though one of the rear off-shots was now a little longer than the others. And the extension would barely be noticeable, if at all, from within Alder Road, where the townscape merit of the buildings is most appreciated. Given this, the proposal would not fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Mortlake Conservation Area. To ensure that, however, a condition should be attached to planning permission to secure appropriate window and roof window detailing as well as one to secure external materials matching those of the existing building.
6. Taken overall, the proposed extensions would not offend against Core Strategy Policy CP7, or Development Management Plan Policies DM DC 1, DM HD 1 and DM HD 3, or what is sought in the Supplementary Planning Documents on House Extensions and External Alterations and on Buildings of Townscape Merit. The appeal may be allowed.

John L Gray

Inspector