
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2016

by Christa Masters MA (hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/16/3159631
155 Thornbury Road, Isleworth, TW7 4QG

- 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 Bridge Estates Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 01119/155/P9, dated 18 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is FF rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for FF rear extension at 155 Thornbury Road, Isleworth, TW7 4QG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 01119/155/P9, dated 18 April 2016 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed: Unnumbered location plan, GTD224-01HA, GTD224-02HA, GTD224-03HA, GTD224-04HA, GTD224-05HA.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.
 - 4) No additional windows or other glazed openings shall be formed in the northern flank walls of the extension hereby approved and no additional doors inserted in the building without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Procedural matter

2. The Council have referred to a previous appeal decision at the site.¹ I have had regard to this decision in reaching my conclusions below.

Main Issues

3. This appeal has two main issues. Firstly, whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Osterley Park Conservation Area. Secondly, the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the

¹ APP/F5540/W/15/3002428

existing and future occupiers of No 153 Thornbury Road as well as the proposed occupiers of the residential unit.

Reasons

Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Osterley Park Conservation Area

4. The appeal site forms part of an established shopping parade. Although I have not been provided with a copy of the Conservation Area Appraisal, I note the officers report refers to the small village street charm of the parade. I can see no reason to disagree with this description. The appeal property comprises an end of terrace property with a commercial unit on the ground floor and an existing residential unit above. There is an access road to the side of the property which separates the appeal site and No 153 Thornbury Road. This road provides access to the rear of the units. The commercial use at ground floor level extends along the access road and Phoenix Travel Management operates from this unit.
5. The rear elevations of the neighbouring properties have been extended and altered with a variety of both single and two storey extensions, some of which are significant in both scale and depth. This forms part of the established character of the area. The proposed rear extension would be positioned over the existing single storey extension. It would be proportionate in scale, height and massing to both the host property and the existing pattern of built development along the rear elevations of the shopping parade.
6. Concerns have been expressed that the flank elevation would appear blank and oppressive. Given that the site is in an end of terrace location facing a service road, I am not convinced that this would be the case. A condition could be attached to ensure that the materials used match those on the host property. This would ensure that the proposal is finished with materials in keeping with the existing pallet of materials in the area. Furthermore, there are 4 existing first floor windows on the flank elevation of No 153 directly facing the appeal site and any additional fenestration detailing at the appeal property could give rise to issues of overlooking.
7. The Council have raised concerns that the first floor extension would be visible to passers by along Thornbury Road. I accept that the extension maybe visible from oblique views down the access road. However, the extension must be considered in the context of the existing character of the area, which comprises a number of extensions of significant height and scale. Taking into account this established character, I am unable to agree that the proposal would be an unsympathetic or incongruous addition to the property.
8. I therefore conclude the proposal would preserve both the character and appearance of the area. It would, as a result, accord with policies CC1,CC2,CC4 and SC7 of the Hounslow Local Plan (LP) 2015. Policy CC1 relates to context and character and advises, amongst other things, that proposals should seek to ensure that all new development conserves and takes opportunities to enhance their special qualities and heritage. Policies CC2 and CC4 are urban design and heritage policies which seek to support high quality urban design as well as ensuring that extensions are in keeping with the character of the building and harmonious with its surroundings and the wider character of the area. Policy SC7 relates to residential extensions and

alterations. It advises, amongst other things, that extensions should not harm the existing character and appearance of the building and its context.

9. Taking the above into account, the proposal would therefore be consistent with paragraph 132 of the Framework which anticipates that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Living Conditions – effect on the existing and future occupiers of No 153 Thornbury Road

10. No 153 operates as a dental practice with residential accommodation at the rear and on the upper floors. This property is separated from the appeal site by a service road which the Council estimate to be 5m in width. There are a number of windows on the flank elevation of the property which face the appeal site. I concur with the view expressed by the previous Inspector that the outlook from these windows is already restricted by the existing building. I have not been provided with details of the use of the rooms these windows serve although the officers report advises that a number of the windows serve habitable rooms.
11. Taking into account the separation distance involved as well as the existing outlook, I am not convinced that the first floor extension proposed would cause material harm to the outlook from these windows. In addition, the separation distance between the two properties would also ensure that the proposal does not create a sense of enclosure to the existing or future occupiers of No 153.

Living Conditions – effect on the future occupiers of the proposed residential unit

12. The appeal proposal would permit the enlargement of the existing flat from a one bedroomed to two bedroomed unit. There is agreement between the main parties that the proposal would provide a residential unit that would be in excess of the minimum floorspace standards as identified by policy SC5 of the LP. Bedroom 1 would measure 16m² which would be well in excess of the national space standard of 11.5m² for a double bedroom.
13. However, bedroom 1 would be served by a single window with obscured glazing set a high level. Although the location of the window would mean the bedroom would have limited outlook, the window would be of a reasonable size and would in my view allow adequate natural light into the room. These are all positive factors which would weigh in favour of the proposal. On balance, I do not consider that the restricted outlook which bedroom 1 would have would be sufficient reason to dismiss the appeal.
14. I have not been provided with the plans which accompanied the previous appeal, however I note from the decision that the unit was to be accessed from the rear. This is not the case here and the access would be as existing from the main Thornbury Road. In addition the proposal before me is for the creation of a two bedroomed unit whereas the previous proposal was for a 1 bedroomed unit only. These are to my mind important material differences between the appeal proposal before me and the previous proposal.
15. The proposal would not provide any outdoor amenity space. The existing residential unit does not provide any amenity space and I was unable to see

any evidence of existing amenity space provision for the other residential accommodation located on the upper floors in the vicinity of the appeal site. I note that policy SC5 of the LP would require a minimum of 5m² of private outdoor space for each 1-2 person dwelling, with an additional 1m² for each additional occupant. The proposal would therefore conflict in part with this policy. However, as noted by the previous Inspector, the lack of outdoor space is to a certain degree offset by the proximity of nearby open spaces. In particular, Osterley Park and House which is a short walk away. Whilst I acknowledge that the accommodation could be occupied by a small family, given the established residential use in this location and the small scale of the extension proposed, I do not consider that in the circumstances of this appeal, the lack of outdoor space would be sufficient reason alone to refuse the appeal.

16. I therefore conclude in relation to the second main issue, the proposal would provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation for the existing and future occupiers of No 153 Thornbury Road, as well as both the existing and future occupiers of the appeal property. For the reasons outlined above, the proposal would conflict in part with policy SC5 of the LP. However, there are material considerations to which I have attributed significant weight detailed above which indicate that development contrary to that part of policy SC5 would be acceptable in this case.
17. The proposal would therefore accord with policies CC2, SC5 (in part) and SC7 of the LP. Policy CC2 requires, amongst other things, that high quality urban design and architecture is supported in order to create liveable places. Policy SC5 advises, amongst other things, that new housing development should contribute towards improving the quality and design of housing across the borough by applying minimum internal space standards. Policy SC7 advises, amongst other things, that development proposals should minimise harm to neighbouring residents and future occupants through high quality design.

Conditions

18. A standard condition limiting the life of the permission is necessary. I also agree that it is necessary to specify the approved plans as this provides certainty. In the interests of character and appearance, I have also included a condition to require the materials proposed to be used on the extension hereby permitted to match those on the host property. Finally, I have also attached a further condition to ensure that no new openings are inserted in the flank elevation of the extension. This is in order to protect the living conditions of the adjoining occupiers.

Conclusion

19. I therefore conclude that having considered all matters raised, the appeal should be allowed.

Christa Masters

INSPECTOR