

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 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/L5810/W/16/3160752

34-36 High Street, Whitton, Middlesex TW2 7LT

- 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 T Sumer against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 16/2236/FUL, dated 6 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of a first floor rear extension to the two existing maisonettes at Nos 34a and 36a.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises two first floor maisonette flats. The building is noted as a building of townscape merit. The properties are located at the rear of Whitton High Street, in a mixed commercial and residential area. The maisonettes are in a highly visible location as there is an existing public car park to the rear and also an access to the High Street which runs along the side of the appeal site.
 4. My attention has been drawn to policy DM HD 3 of the Development Management Plan (DMP) 2011. This policy relates to buildings of townscape merit. The policy advises, amongst other things, that alterations and extensions should be based on an accurate understanding of the significance of the asset including the structure, and respect the architectural character and detailing of the original building.
 5. From what I saw on the site visit, the appeal site has a uniform appearance in both scale and form in common with a number of the other existing maisonettes along the upper floors. The extension proposed would protrude out into the existing terrace area by a distance of approximately 3m. It would also extend the entire width of the property. As a result of the size and scale of the proposal, the extension would in my view be at odds with the established character and form of the rear elevations of these properties. The proposal would introduce a bulky feature in this prominent corner location which would
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fail to be subservient to the host property. It would introduce an uncharacteristic development to the host property which would fail to respect the architectural character and detailing of the original building.

6. The appellant has referred to an existing extension at Nos 52-58 High Street. However, I have not been provided with any details concerning this extension, including when it was constructed. In addition, I am not aware if this building is also designated as a building of townscape merit. The similarities I can draw between the two sites are therefore limited. In any event, each proposal must be considered on its own merits as is the case here.
7. I acknowledge that the materials proposed could match the existing property. I also note that the appeal site is in a sustainable location. However, these factors alone do not outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area I have outlined above.
8. I therefore conclude the proposal would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be in conflict with policies CP7 of the Core Strategy (CS) 2009, as well as policies DM HD 3 and DM DC 1 of the DMP. Policy CP7 advises, amongst other things, that all new development should recognise distinctive local character and contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality. Policy DM DC 1 relates to design quality and advises, amongst other things, that development must be compatible with local character including existing relationships to townscape and frontages. These policies are consistent with the Framework and in particular, paragraph 56 which advises, amongst other things, that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
9. Reference has also been made to both the Whitton and Heathfield Village Planning Guidance, 2014 as well as the Supplementary Planning Guidance, Design Guidelines for House Extensions and External Alterations, 2002. However, my attention has not been drawn to anything specific within these documents which would alter my conclusions on the main issue.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Christa Masters

INSPECTOR