

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2017

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 6 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5630/D/16/3164527

44 Princes Avenue, Tolworth, KT6 7JN

- 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 Knighton against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
 - The application Ref 16/10390/HOU, dated 6 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension, loft conversion with rear dormer and front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi detached dwelling located at a prominent corner between Princes Avenue and Kingsmead Avenue. The property and its attached neighbour face towards this corner, such that they are set at an angle to other pairs of semi detached houses along the two Avenues. Consequently, the side gable wall of the appeal property faces towards Princes Avenue, albeit at an offset angle.
 4. The surrounding area is residential and largely comprises similar two storey semi detached dwellings. During my site visit, I observed that many dwellings have been altered and/or extended, but that such changes largely appear in keeping with their surroundings. Consequently, dwellings appear modern and updated, whilst maintaining an attractive sense of rhythm and uniformity.
 5. Houses are set back from the road behind short gardens and/or parking areas, which, together with the presence of pavements and wide grass verges, occasional street trees, hedgerows and planting, contribute to a pleasant green and spacious local character. Being corner properties, the appeal property and its adjoining neighbour are set further back from the road, with larger front/side gardens, adding to the sense of greenery and spaciousness in this location.
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6. The proposed two storey side extension would not be set back from the existing building line of the front elevation and would greatly extend the appeal property to the side, such that it would appear to almost double the dwelling's width. I find that the impacts of this would result in a large and bulky extension that unduly dominate the host property, rather than appear subordinate to it.
7. The harmful impact of the above would be exacerbated as a result of the proposed hipped roof to the side extension, which would be lower than, and appear awkward when seen against, the proposed hip to gable extension that it would adjoin. This awkward appearance would be compounded as a result of the proposal significantly unbalancing the relationship between the appeal property and its adjoining neighbour, which only has a small dormer projecting from the roof. In contrast, the height, scale and awkward appearance of the proposed dormer would result in it dominating the roofscape, thus unbalancing the relationship with the adjoining property.
8. Taking the above into account, the proposed dormer would also draw attention to itself as an incongruous feature, widely visible from a variety of locations in the surrounding area.
9. The proposed porch would project from the front elevation extremely close to the existing bay window. I find that this would result in an unsatisfactory, somewhat cluttered appearance and this would be to the further detriment of local character.
10. In addition to the above, the proposed extension would result in a development that steps forward of the building line along Princes Avenue. Whilst the presence of tall hedgerows and trees would soften the overall impact of the proposal to a small degree, it would, due to its scale, form and siting, appear "out of kilter" with the area's attributes of uniformity and openness, identified above.
11. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the Framework, Core Strategy¹ policies CS08 and DM10, London Plan (2015) policies 7.4 and 7.6, and the Council's Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document (2013), which together amongst other things, protect local character.

Other Matters

12. I note above that the proposal would impact negatively on the sense of symmetry between the appeal property and its attached neighbour. During my site visit, I noted that one of the properties on the opposite side of Kingsmead Avenue to the appeal site has been extended significantly to the side. Whilst the design of that extension and the position of the host property to which it relates differ to the design and position of the proposal before me, I observed that it leads the host property to appear unbalanced when seen together with its neighbour.

¹ Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2012).

13. In support of his case, the appellant refers to other developments elsewhere. However, none of these comprise developments that are the same as the development proposed and in any case, I have found that the proposal the subject of this appeal would result in harm to local character. This harm is not something that is lessened to a significant degree by the existence of other developments elsewhere.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR