

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2017

by Paul Singleton BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/16/3166357

187 Fulwell Park Avenue, Twickenham TW2 5HD

- 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 Nick Irving against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 16/3136/HOT, dated 4 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and construction of a single storey rear extension with small raised deck.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect on the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area and on the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjoining dwellings with regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appellant contends that the proposed extension would have a relatively modest floor area compared to that of the existing dwelling. Whilst that might be the case it would be of considerable scale and bulk. Due to its height and depth the proposal would add a substantial area of blank wall to the side elevation of the house and would significantly increase the length of that elevation. In this side view the proposal would appear out of proportion with the host property. The poor relationship between the proposed addition and the existing building would be still more apparent from the rear of the house.
 4. Due to the combined effect of its 4 metre (m) depth, the considerable expanse of the proposed mono pitch roof, and the projection of that roof up to the cill level of the first floor windows, the proposed extension would appear as a large and bulky addition to the existing dwelling. Most of the existing rear wall of the property would be obscured from view and the rear elevation would be dominated by the new addition. The rear elevation is hidden from views from the street but the proposed extension would appear over-dominant and obtrusive when seen from the rear windows and gardens of neighbouring houses.
-

5. I accept that a number of the houses on the north side of Fullwell Park Avenue have rear additions. However, none of those that can be seen from the garden of number 187 are as large and bulky as the appeal proposal would be. That to the adjoining house, at No 185, is of much more modest scale. Some of the rear additions to other properties have roofs projecting to first floor cill level. However, these additions appear to have respected the guidance in the Council's House Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2015) that rear extensions should not exceed 3m in depth. Hence, the expanse of the roof area to those extensions is smaller and they do not have the same overall scale and bulk as the appeal proposal would have.
6. I find that the proposal would dominate the existing house and that its lack of subservience would result in the original form of the host building being lost. It would have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling and, although public views would be limited, would cause some harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, the proposal conflicts with Policy DC 1 of the London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames Development Management Plan (DPM) (2011) which requires that new development must be of a high architectural and urban design quality. It also conflicts with Policy CP 7 of the London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames Core Strategy (2009) which states that all new development should contribute to creating places of high architectural and urban design quality.

Living Conditions

7. The single storey rear addition to No 185 is of less than 2m depth and has patio doors and full height glazing to much of its elevation to the rear garden. The height of that rear addition appears to have been misrepresented in the appeal plans as its roof is much lower than those of the extension to No 183 and the existing rear addition to the appeal property (see appellant's photographs). The adjacent outbuilding provides some screening to the shared boundary with the appeal property but is only around 2m long and of similar height.
8. The appeal proposal would project over 2m beyond the patio doors and ground floor windows to No 185 and would introduce a significant area of blank wall above the eye line of anyone standing or sitting in those windows. In my judgement the proposal would result in an increased sense of enclosure for the occupiers of the adjacent house when using their rear living room or the adjacent patio area, notwithstanding the screening provided by the outbuilding on the boundary. Although it would be small in area the proposed raised deck would enable views into the rear garden of No 185 and would result in some loss of privacy for the next door neighbours.
9. As numbers 187 and 189 are separated by a shared access the appeal proposal would be some 4.5m from the conservatory to No 189. I noted on my site visit that the door to that conservatory is on the side elevation and that steps from the doorway lead down to the rear garden. Hence, what might otherwise be a view of the proposed extension out of a side window is likely to be a 'face on' view whenever the occupiers of No 189 exit from the conservatory to the garden. That view would be of the highest part (at between 3 and 3.5m) of the side elevation to the proposed extension and, having regard to that relationship, I find that the proposal would also cause a moderate level of harm to the outlook of the neighbouring occupiers of No 189.

10. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to DPM Policy DC 5 which seeks to protect adjoining properties from unreasonable loss of privacy and from visual intrusion as a result of new development.

Other Matters

11. The proposal would be of advantage to the appellant in terms of the additional living accommodation it would provide but this this would be a private benefit. It would not outweigh the harm that would be caused or the resultant development plan conflict.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Singleton

INSPECTOR