The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2017

by Debbie Moore BSc (HONS) MCD MRTPI PGDip

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

Decision date: 27 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/16/3166086
4a Church Court, Richmond-upon-Thames, Richmond TW9 1JL

- 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 Steve Dunn against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
- The application Ref 16/1667/FUL, dated 27 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2016.
- The development proposed is a second floor roof extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a second floor roof extension at 4a Church Court, Richmond-upon-Thames, Richmond TW9 1JL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/1667/FUL, dated 27 April 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: Location Plan Drawing No 14/11/00, dated June 2014; Block Plan Drawing No 14/11/01, dated June 2014; Existing First and Second Floor Plans Drawing No 16/06/02, dated March 2016; Existing Section AA Drawing No 16/06/03, dated March 2016; Existing Rear Elevation Drawing No 16/06/04, dated March 2016; Proposed First and Second Floor Plans Drawing No 16/06/05 dated March 2016; Proposed Rear Elevation Drawing No 16/06/06, dated March 2016; Proposed Side Elevation and Section CC Drawing No 16/06/07, dated March 2016 .

   3) No development shall commence until details / samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces, including joinery and fenestration, of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details / samples.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on the host building and other heritage assets in the vicinity, in particular the Central Richmond Conservation Area, and the character and appearance of the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal building is located within the Conservation Area, which is described in the Council's Conservation Area Statement as a predominantly commercial shopping area, which retains the original street pattern of the former village centre. The Conservation Area is threaded by several small lanes leading into the historic Richmond that lies behind the 19th Century commercial redevelopment. The appeal building is located on one of these lanes, within a three-storey terrace that contains ground floor shops. It is identified by the Council as a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM). The significance of this non-designated heritage asset appears to be attributed to the age of the building, the architectural features and its siting on one of the historic lanes. The appeal relates to the upper floor of the property and the development would be located at the rear.

4. Church Court leads to the listed St Mary Magdalene Church. The churchyard enclosure provides contrast to the commercial frontages on George Street and is a refuge from the busier shopping area. The churchyard enables public views to the rear of the terrace fronting Church Court, including the appeal building.

5. The Council highlights that one of the key problems and pressures on the area is the loss of traditional features and unsympathetic alterations. The appeal building has already been extended, as has the adjoining public house. The resulting additions both have flat roofs and, although not visible from Church Court itself, are visible from the churchyard and other nearby properties. It appears that the rear addition to the public house is not recent. Nevertheless, the symmetry and rhythm at the rear of the terrace group has already been compromised by these previous extensions.

6. The development would add a second floor over the existing rear extension, with a pitched roof and a dormer window. The proposed extension would reflect the style of the original building due to its design, in particular its roof. Whilst the proposal would add to the size and prominence of the existing extension, the second floor alteration would be more appropriate to the architectural style of the original building than the existing flat roofed structure. I appreciate that the scale of the resulting rear extension would not reflect the guidance contained in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document,[1] as it would not be subordinate to the main building. However, the development before me would be a relatively modest addition and I consider that the resulting effect would be a marginal improvement. The development would result in the loss of two windows but these do not appear to be original and it is not clear how they contribute to the significance of the BTM.

7. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. The proposal would change the appearance of the rear of the property and the terraced group as a whole. However, the main architectural features of the front elevation would be unaffected. The age of the building and its historic location would still be evident. Consequently, I conclude that its significance as a BTM, and the significance of the adjoining BTMs, would be unaffected.

[1] LB Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and External Alterations May 2015

8. The development would be visible in the wider area but, for the reasons given above, I consider that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved. Also, the development would not have a significant detrimental effect on visual amenity to those people living nearby or passing through the area.

9. The churchyard is an attractive enclave within an otherwise busy commercial area. The development would be a sufficient distance from the listed building and its setting would not be affected by the relatively modest extension.

10. I note that there has been a previous appeal decision[2] for a similar development at the property. The full balance of considerations that informed that decision is not before me. However, it appears that the previous scheme was for a larger and more modern design and, therefore, not comparable to the current appeal.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have specific the approved plans as this provides certainty. I have also imposed a condition requiring samples of materials to ensure the development complements the existing building.

Conclusion

12. I conclude that the development would not have an adverse effect on the significance of the host building and other non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity. Therefore it would accord with Policy DM HD3 of the Development Management Plan,[3] which seeks to ensure the preservation and enhancement of BTMs. I find that the development would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy DM HD1 of the Development Management Plan, and the setting of the listed building. Consequently, the development accords with Policies DM DC1 of the Development Management Plan and Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy, [4] which seek to promote high quality design and ensure that existing buildings and areas of recognised high quality and historic interest are protected.

13. The appeal is, therefore, allowed.

Debbie Moore

Inspector

[2] APP/L5810/D/14/2214423
[3] LB Richmond Upon Thames Local Development Framework: Development Management Plan, adopted November 2011
[4] LB Richmond Upon Thames Local Development Framework: Core Strategy, adopted April 2009