

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2017

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/17/3173800

1 Aquarius, Eel Pie Island, Twickenham TW1 3EA

- 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 Doug Garrett against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 16/4353/HOT, dated 10 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a first floor extension over the existing ground floor to the front of a two storey 1970's end of terraced house. New glazing and remedial structural works to rear of house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a first floor extension over the existing ground floor to the front of a two storey 1970's end of terraced house, new glazing and remedial structural works to rear of house at 1 Aquarius, Eel Pie Island, Twickenham TW1 3EA in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 16/4353/HOT, dated 10 November 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: Refs 1428/000, 1609/100 B, 1609/101 B, 1609/200 A and 1609/201 A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main issue

2. The Council appears to raise no objection to the new replacement doors and windows in the rear elevation of the appeal property, the roof light above the first floor bathroom and the remedial structural works. I, too, find these elements of the appeal scheme acceptable, as their design would be in keeping with the visual character of the host building and the local area.
 3. The main issue is, therefore, the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.
-

Reasons

4. The appeal property is an end terrace house that forms part of a residential development called Aquarius, which comprises three blocks, each of six terrace dwellings set within communal landscaped grounds. The design of the Aquarius buildings, with their curved dark brick panels on the upper façades, shallow mono-pitched roofs and large areas of glazing, is locally distinctive.
5. Aquarius stands towards one end of Eel Pie Island, which contains an eclectic mix of individual low-rise buildings, chalets and boat sheds, set within a peaceful and largely secluded wooded environment. Both Aquarius, with its individual style, and Eel Pie Island, with its attractive riverside setting, juxtaposition to the busy commercial centre of Twickenham and unusual mix of buildings, add to the character and appearance of the Twickenham Riverside Conservation Area (CA), within which the site falls. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, as required by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
6. An additional storey is proposed above the existing single storey front projection of No 1, thereby creating two levels in all. The new addition has been carefully designed to reflect the style of the host building. It would be modest in size and depth with a height and roof form that would be consistent with that of the existing dwelling. These features, coupled with the use of matching external materials and consistent pattern of fenestration, would ensure that the appeal scheme would relate well to No 1 and thus retain its visual character. As No 1 has been extended and altered, the proposal would depart further from the original design of the host dwelling and terrace. However, the scale and style of the proposal would reflect the host building itself, its period and its architectural ethos. As such, the new development would be a sympathetic addition. It would harmonise with the appearance of the host building in accordance with the advice within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *House Extensions and Alterations* (SPD).
7. A noticeably taller and larger projection in the front façade of No 1 would result, which would be evident mainly from part of the footway that runs in front of the Aquarius scheme, the communal garden just to one side of the appeal property and some nearby buildings. From the adjacent pathway, the design of the finished building, with its 2-storey front projection, would set it apart from other dwellings in the same block. Nevertheless, the proposal would create a definitive end stop to the terrace, which would not look out of place especially given the staggered front build line of the block. Furthermore, the dark panel in the upper front façade and the curve to the front wall would remain clearly legible as distinctive features of the building.
8. From the communal garden next to the site and some nearby properties, the proposal would appear proportionate in scale and bulk and in keeping with the character of the host building. Consequently, it would not draw the eye as an obtrusive form of development. Moreover, the new windows in the flank wall would also be consistent with the pattern of fenestration in the main building.
9. Drawing these various points together, No 1, once extended, would have an acceptable overall appearance. The finished building would be compatible with

its context. It would have been significantly changed on each side, but the resultant dwelling would be of high standard design in keeping with the qualities and character of the host building. While the completed building would be more substantive in built form, it would continue to stand comfortably in its verdant riverside setting with no obvious sense of overdevelopment of the site. From what I saw, several properties in the Aquarius development, including No 1, have been extended and externally altered without detriment to the character and qualities of the host building, the CA or the local area. The proposal would do likewise.

10. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host building. The character and appearance of the CA and that of the local area would be preserved. Accordingly, there would be no material conflict with Policy CP7 of the Council's Core Strategy and Policies DM DC 1 and DM DC5 of its Development Management Plan (DMP). These policies require development to recognise and respect local character and contribute to creating places of high design quality. It would also comply with the Council's SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework, which emphasises the importance of securing high quality design and states that heritage assets should be protected or enhanced.
11. Part of the new extension would be evident from the outdoor space just in front of the properties in the same block, the nearest of which is 2 Aquarius. From this vantage point, the proposal would be set back from view and seen in the context of the main dwelling. Having viewed No 1 from this direction, I consider that the scale and mass of the new built form would not be so great or imposing as to visually dominate or overbear on the occupiers of No 2. From what I saw, little of the proposal would be readily visible from the buildings to the east given the screening provided by well-established vegetation. Consequently, there would be no material conflict with DMP Policy DM DC5 insofar as it aims to safeguard residential amenity.
12. The Council has also referred to Policies LP1 and LP8 of its Local Plan (Publication 2017) (LP). However, as this document is progressing towards adoption, its policies may change and so I attach limited weight to it for the purpose of this appeal.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings and to require that the development be carried out in accordance with them as this provides certainty. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development, a condition is imposed to require that the external materials match those of the existing building.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR