

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: 04 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/17/3173758

9 Marsh Farm Road, Twickenham TW2 6SH

- 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 Martin Leach against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 17/0008/HOT was refused by notice dated 6 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a side extension at first and second floor levels over part of the existing yard. To include a Roof with Gable End and roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. I have dealt with another appeal¹ on this site. That appeal is the subject of a separate decision.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a mainly 2-storey house with a gated yard at the side and rear within a predominantly residential area, wherein buildings vary in scale, design, age and general appearance. In the vicinity of the site, properties line one side of Marsh Farm Road with a retaining wall, security fencing and railway embankment on the other. The site is not within a conservation area nor is No 9 identified as a building of townscape merit.
5. The proposal would result in a significantly larger dwelling with much wider front and rear elevations. The pitched front roof slope of the new addition would continue from that of the host building with a dormer placed onto the proposed rear roof slope. When seen from the street, the additional new built form especially at high level would accentuate the sharp contrast in scale, proportions and roof style between No 9 and the attached property, which retains its 2-storey built form and hipped roof. By exacerbating these

¹ Ref APP/L5810/D/17/3173760

- differences, the proposal would further unbalance the built form of No 9 and its attached counterpart, which would be obtrusive in the local street scene.
6. In the new front façade would be a relatively wide opening at ground floor level containing what would probably be, or closely resemble, the door to a garage. Such an arrangement would be generally atypical of most properties along Marsh Farm Road, with the exception of No 8. This adjacent dwelling has an integral garage in its front elevation. However, No 8 has a modern design and its garage is a feature more typical of its period compared to the traditional style of No 9. To my mind, the relatively wide ground floor opening would visually dominate the front elevation of the extended building. It would conflict unsatisfactorily with the modest-sized openings in the front of No 9, the attached building and those nearby. Consequently, a discordant element would be introduced to the built frontage along Marsh Farm Road.
 7. At the rear, the new dormer would be modest in size and placed at a high level on the roof slope with the flat top broadly aligning with ridge. With a good expanse of new rear roof slope evident beneath and at each side of the dormer, this element of the proposal would allow the pitched rear roof slope to remain dominant in the composition. Nevertheless, it is not clearly severable to the rest of the appeal scheme, which is objectionable for the reasons given.
 8. In reaching these conclusions, I acknowledge the use of matching external materials and note that the position and size of the new windows would be in keeping with those of the host building. The upper sidewall to the proposed extension would be set back 1-metre from the site's boundary beyond which is No 8. This set back would be in accordance with the advice in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *House Extensions and External Alterations* (SPD). I share the appellant's opinion that the current space that separates Nos 8 and 9 that would be occupied by the proposal contributes little positively to the local street scene.
 9. The appellant considers that the appeal scheme would constitute infill development to which a different policy than those cited by the Council applies. Whether or not that is the case, the main determining factor in this appeal is whether the new development would be assimilated into the prevailing character and appearance of the local area. Policy DM HO 2 of the Council's Development Management Plan (DMP) reflects this issue. It states that infill development must reflect the character of the surrounding area.
 10. With its side and rear yard, the appeal property is unique in its context and so the scope for development may well vary to the general parameters set out in planning policy and the Council's SPD. Even so, both the DMP and SPD offer some flexibility in bringing forward proposals by acknowledging that there are different ways to ensure that development harmonises with the host building and the surrounding area. In any event, each proposal should be assessed on its own merits, which I have done in this instance.
 11. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the importance of achieving high quality design and notes that development should respond to local character and add to the overall qualities of an area. For the reasons given, the proposal would not adhere to these important principles.

12. Against that background, I conclude on the main issue that the proposed development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policy CP7 of the Council's Core Strategy and DMP Policy DC DM 1, which aim to ensure that development achieves high quality design and connects with, and adds to, its surroundings.
13. The proposal would make efficient use of the space at the side of No 9 and, once complete, the additional living space would enhance the living conditions of the appellant. However, these matters do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the main issue.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, and taking into account the absence of objections from others, I conclude that the proposal is not a sustainable form of development and that appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR