
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2017

by A A Phillips BA (Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/17/3173071
59 Spencer Road, Twickenham TW2 5TG

- 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 M Slater against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 16/4659/HOT, dated 7 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion and first floor infill extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion and first floor infill extension at 59 Spencer Road, Twickenham TW2 5TG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/4659/HOT, dated 7 December 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 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, 02, 03, 04, 05 and 06.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Procedural Matter

3. I have noted that the Council has referred to the Local Plan Publication Version for Consultation 4 January – 15 February 2017 in its reason for refusal. However, this has not yet been adopted and does not yet form part of the development plan and therefore, in determining the current appeal I have given it limited weight. In any case the emerging policies do not significantly change the Council's approach from those in the adopted plan.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two storey detached residential property within a suburban part of Twickenham. Properties along the street are mainly pairs of

semi-detached houses, although there are some detached houses. At my site visit I observed that many properties in the area have been altered and extended, including two storey side extensions, hip to gable roof extensions and dormer roof extensions. There is also a variety of materials in the area including brick and render with various roof materials. The variety in the properties, non-uniformity and the different roof forms are very much part of the current character of the attractive residential area.

5. The appeal property is an individually designed property with rendered walls and a tiled hipped roof. It appears that the property has previously been extended with a side garage and single and two storey flat roof rear extensions. At the time of my site visit I also saw that that a single storey rear extension is currently being built and the property is being renovated.
6. There is extensive dense landscaping around the property, including to the front and along both sides of the rear garden.
7. The current proposal is for an additional first floor rear and side extension along with a rear and side roof extension which would incorporate a Juliet balcony facing to the rear. The extension would include raising the roof ridge by approximately 0.45 metres to create a 'crown style' roof shape by extending the property by approximately 6.2 metres to the rear flank projection level with the existing rear elevation of the property.
8. Although the roof form of the property would change significantly I do not consider that the alteration would be uncharacteristic of the area and, although substantial, would not necessarily harm the integrity of the host property or the area, generally. Rather, it would provide a simpler and more unified design which would not appear incongruous or at odds with its residential setting, but would integrate itself well with the host property, replacing the awkward arrangement of existing flat roof extensions on the rear of the property, replacing them with a much simpler pitched roof form. The roof line would remain lower than the adjoining properties Nos 55 and 57. Furthermore, the proposal would retain the cat slide roof profile which is an important visual feature on front elevation of the building.
9. I do not consider that the overall character of the individual detached property would be materially harmed to the detriment of its setting and the residential area, generally. The extension and alterations proposed would be proportionate to the existing dwelling and, although large, the mass and scale would not be inappropriate in its setting and would not dominate the street scene or detract from what is currently an attractive residential frontage.
10. Any concern relating to the overall effect of the proposal on the scale and proportions of the building would be significantly mitigated by the presence of the extensive and dense tree and shrub cover around the boundaries of the site. From the front the roof lift would be relatively insignificant and the rear extension, set back approximately 8.0 metres from the front elevation of the property, which would project approximately 0.6 metres beyond the existing side wall would also be negligible in terms of visual impact.
11. From the southern approach towards the site along Spencer Road and from the front the proposal would not be visible from the public realm due to the dense tree cover. It may be partly visible from the rear of adjacent flats in Thurnby Court through small gaps in the boundary tree cover; however, rather than

dominating the outlook from these properties, the proposal would be seen as a well-integrated extension. From the north the visible massing of the building would increase. However, as previously explained above the form of the extension would not be incongruous or dominant, but would fit in with the established buildings in the locality. The proposed new roof profile would not be overbearing visually from either side nor do I find that the proposal would constitute gross overdevelopment of the building.

12. Therefore, although the extension would be substantial I do not consider that it would be overly dominant or be a visually intrusive or incongruous form of development. As such its cumulative effect would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and it would comply with Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy Adopted April 2009, Policy DM DC1 of the Development Management Plan Adopted November 2011 (DM Plan) and the Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document House Extensions and External Alterations May 2015. Among other objectives these policies seek to ensure that new development recognises local character, is of a high architectural quality, connects with its surroundings and ensure that rear extensions should not dominate the existing house and harmonise with its original appearance.

Other matters

13. Concern is expressed in the Council's officer report regarding the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupants of nearby residential properties with particular reference to outlook. However, this is not set out in the reason for refusal and I therefore conclude that it was such a substantial concern to warrant refusal on those grounds in this particular case.
14. From No 57 Spencer Road the sloping roof design of the extension and the distance from the common boundaries leads me to conclude that the outlook would not be harmed to an unacceptable degree. The proposed extension would be approximately fifteen metres from the rear elevation of residential flats in Thurnby Court and would be situated behind a car parking area and dense and high tree and vegetation cover, which I understand is in the control of the owners of Thurnby Court. The extension would not encroach towards the flats and the sloping roof on the proposed south side would also mitigate the potential effect regarding outlook.
15. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the outlook from neighbouring properties and therefore would not conflict with Policy DM DC5 of the DM Plan or the Supplementary Planning Document House Extensions and External Alterations.

Conditions

16. I have specified the approved plans as this provides certainty. I have also imposed a condition specifying matching materials.

Conclusion

17. Therefore, for the reasons given above and taking into account other matters raised I conclude that the proposal is in accordance with the development plan taken as a whole and that the appeal should be allowed.

Alastair Phillips INSPECTOR