

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2017

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 1 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/17/3177608

73 Lion Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 4HT

- 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 Barry Coffey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 17/0464/HOT, dated 31 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 7 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a first floor extension to existing bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's decision notice contains the following statement:

For the avoidance of doubt the Drawing(s) No(s) to which this decision refers are as follows:- PP00, PP01, PP02, PP03, PP04, 0005 and PP08 received on 06.02.2017.

3. The Council has since confirmed that Drawing Nos. PP06 & PP07 were also considered as part of the determination.

Main issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on: (a) the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings; (b) neighbouring residents' living conditions with particular reference to outlook and visual impact, and (c) car parking provision.
5. Reasons

Effect on host property and surroundings

6. The appeal property is a bungalow built on a narrow site between an access drive leading to relatively modern housing development in Landsdowne Close and the rear of the older terraced properties fronting Albert Road.
 7. Notwithstanding the appellant's description of the proposal contained in the planning application form, the scheme involves the addition of a second floor to the bungalow, which is, by definition, single storey. In effect, the appellant wishes to create a two-storey dwelling, with the upper floor accommodating 2 bedrooms and a bathroom.
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8. The appellant says that in view of the various extensions that have taken place to the rear of the Albert Road properties, the massing of the bungalow is no longer appropriate and as a result looks out of place. He maintains that the design has evolved over a period of 6 months with particular care being taken in consideration of fenestration, set-back from the ground floor footprint, height, massing and appearance.
9. I do not consider that the design succeeds. The bungalow, in view of its relatively small scale on a confined site, is relatively unobtrusive. The addition of a second floor in the manner proposed would convey a clear impression of harmful overdevelopment. The design, in my view, is of a contrived and mundane appearance and, if built, the resultant structure would detract harmfully from the local street scene. Accordingly, I consider that the proposal has little to commend it in design terms, not least since it pays scant regard to the prevailing visual and spatial context.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed scheme would harm the character and appearance of the host property and its surroundings. Accordingly, a material conflict with those provisions of policy CP7 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy (CS) and policy DM DC1 of the Council's Development Management Policies Plan (DMP) that, in combination, require development to be well designed so as to connect positively with their surroundings and to be compatible with local character.

Living conditions

11. The structure would be orientated on a north to south axis so that the new two storey eastern elevation would run virtually parallel to the boundary separating the plot from the back gardens of about four Albert Road properties. Although the two-storey element would be set back from the ground floor footprint at this point, the higher element would nevertheless be built at a distance of less than 3m from the boundary.
12. Given its closeness to the boundary, the two-storey element, in view of its height, would be perceived as dominating and oppressive by those closest residents of Albert Road from within their dwellings and more so from their back gardens. They would feel increasingly and harmfully hemmed-in by development.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the living conditions of those Albert Street residents whose dwellings back onto the site by reason of adverse visual impact. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with the provisions of DMP policy DM DC5 wherein the Council, in assessing the effects of new development, seeks to protect the residents of adjoining properties from visual intrusion.

Car parking

14. The Council says that:

'The proposed increase in floorspace will create a dwelling which can have reasonable use as a 3 bedroom house, and as such should make provision for 2 off street parking spaces.'

15. The appellant says that this would be a 2 bedroom house, although I note that earlier, superseded drawings showed more. Nonetheless, I saw that sufficient

space existed in the forecourt at the front of the bungalow to accommodate two parked vehicles. It therefore seems to me that the Council's stated requirement could be met on site.

16. I therefore conclude that the Council has not clearly demonstrated that car parking would prove problematical. Accordingly, there is no conflict with those provisions of DMP policy DM TP 8 requiring appropriate levels of car parking to be provided in new development.

Other matters

17. All other matters raised in the representations have been taken into account, including the views of local residents. Most of the points raised have already been taken into account in dealing with the three main issues identified at the outset. There is no convincing evidence that overlooking leading to loss of privacy would occur, or that the levels of sunlight/daylight enjoyed by neighbouring residents would be unacceptably impaired.
18. I have noted the reference to policy contained in the emerging Local Plan, but since this is yet to be examined the policies are subject to change. Accordingly, little weight can be attributed to the draft policy mentioned.
19. All other matters raised in the representations have been taken into account, but none is of such strength or significance as to outweigh the considerations that led me to my overall conclusions.

Overall conclusions

20. I find for the appellant in respect of the third main issue relating to car parking provision. However, I find against him on the first two main issues in respect of the effect on the character and appearance of the host property/surrounding area and on the living conditions of neighbouring residents. These are sufficient reason to dismiss the appeal.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR