
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 September 2017

by Stephen Roscoe BEng MSc CEng MICE

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

Decision date: 9th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/17/3179128

7 Abercorn Mews, Richmond, London TW10 6BY

- 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 David Baugh against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 17/1230/HOT, dated 27 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 23 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion with a rear dormer.
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Procedural Matters

1. The Council's description of the appeal development on its refusal notice differs from that in the planning application. Whilst I consider that the Council's description better describes the proposal, it does not refer to a proposed window on the gable wall of the terrace which is shown on the submitted plans. This window is also not included in the description for an earlier proposal for a loft conversion, including a dormer, that was approved under appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/16/3148512 but not yet implemented. I have therefore considered the appeal, as set out below, on this basis as well as that described in the Council's refusal notice.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion incorporating a rear dormer roof extension, 3 no. roof lights to the front slope and a gable wall window at 7 Abercorn Mews, Richmond, London TW10 6BY in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 17/1230/HOT, dated 27 March 2017, and subject to the conditions listed at the end of this decision.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. I consider the main issues in this case to be whether the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and its host terrace and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the St Matthias Conservation Area (CA). The appeal property is part of a relatively new terrace development within the CA which is served by a private road between older and parallel streets. The terrace generally lies perpendicular to these streets.

4. The rear roof slope of the appeal property broadly faces the rear garden areas of the older housing on these streets, and the ground rises away from the appeal property. There is no evidence, from my site visit or the representations, that the rear roof slope is visible from any public areas, unlike the front roof slope, which is just visible from Kings Road to the east of the appeal terrace. The dwellings on Kings Road include mansard roofs and significant roof extensions at second floor level. The Council has designated No 4 Princes Road as a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM). It is one of the nearest buildings to the west of the appeal terrace and has, what appear to be, full width roof dormers on the front and rear roof slopes. From all of the above, significant upper additions to dwellings are not unusual for the area.
5. The proposed dormer would add to the dormer permitted under the appeal already noted and would be of a similar design. The proposed dormer would leave a sufficient area of existing roof below and above it to avoid domination in a vertical sense. It would be set back from the face of the permitted dormer, but would result in a dormer feature over the full width of the roof of the property between the coping features that separate the individual properties in the terrace. It would however be adjacent to the gable wall of the terrace. The close proximity of this gable would retain the legibility of the roof form and prevent the original roof from being dominated by the proposed dormer in accordance with the aims of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document¹ (SPD).
6. The resulting roof projection would also be similar to others in the area, and it would represent a sensitive enhancement to the property in accordance with Core Strategy² (CS) Policy CP7. It would also be compatible with the local character as required by Development Management Plan³ (DMP) Policy DM DC1 and Publication Local Plan⁴ (PLP) Policy LP1 to which I accord significant weight given the nature of the policy.
7. The only public view of the proposed dormer would be from Kings Road across a private car park, where a distant view of the gable end of the appeal terrace can be seen. The side profile of the dormer would be visible in this view. It would however not be readily visible or prominent from elsewhere due to garden vegetation and the topography of the area. In any event, it would not be an unusual feature for the surrounding area. The dormer would therefore conserve the character and appearance of the CA in accordance with DMP Policy DM HD1.
8. The permitted dormer would lie between the proposed dormer and No 4 Princes Road. The proposed dormer would therefore be screened from, and would not obscure views of, No 4. Furthermore, the proposed roof projection would not be incompatible with No 4. The proposed dormer would thus preserve the setting of the BTM as required by PLP Policy LP4, to which I attach significant weight due to the nature of the policy.

¹ London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames: Local Plan: Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and External Alterations: May 2015

² London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames: Local Development Framework: Core Strategy: April 2009

³ London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames: Local Development Framework: Development Management Plan: November 2011

⁴ London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames: Local Plan: Publication Version for Consultation: 4 January – 15 February 2017

9. The appeal proposal includes three roof lights on the front roof slope of the property. The permitted loft conversion however includes four such roof lights. The Council has not objected to the three roof lights, and I can see no reason to disagree. The Council has also not objected to the window in the gable wall of the property, and again I can see no reason to disagree.
10. I therefore conclude that the appeal proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and its host terrace and would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. I further conclude that it would thus not conflict with CS Policy CP7, DMP Policies DM DC1 and DM HD1, PLP Policies LP1 and LP4 and the Council's SPD.

Conditions

11. The planning application drawings advise that the proposed external materials and fenestration would match those on the original building. I consider however that a condition in relation to matching materials and fenestration would be required to protect the character and appearance of the appeal property and the CA. It would also be necessary that the proposed development should be undertaken in accordance with the approved drawings for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A condition would therefore be required to define the approved drawings.

Conclusion

12. Having taken into account all other matters raised, none carry sufficient weight to alter the decision, and my conclusion is based on the evidence before me in terms of policy as a whole. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Stephen Roscoe

INSPECTOR

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 drawings:
 - Site Location Plan
 - Existing Plans & Roof Plan 1 Rev A
 - Existing Sections 2 Rev A
 - Existing Elevations 3 Rev A
 - Proposed Loft Plan 4 Rev A
 - Proposed Sections 5 Rev A
 - Proposed Plans & Roof Plan 6 Rev A
 - Proposed Elevations 7 Rev A
- 3) Notwithstanding condition 2, the materials to be used on the external surfaces and the fenestration of the extension hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.
