

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2019

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/19/3228552

4 Hounslow Road, Twickenham, TW2 7EX

- 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 Paul Padda against the decision of Richmond Upon Thames London Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0317/FUL, dated 30 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a part first floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a part first floor extension at 4 Hounslow Road, Twickenham, TW2 7EX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/0317/FUL, dated 30 January 2019, subject to the following condition:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P/401, P/402 & P/403.

Preliminary Matter

2. A development which broadly reflects the appeal proposal has been completed but there would be some variation in height and fenestration between this and the submitted plans. For the avoidance of doubt I am not assessing the works undertaken but rather the plans before me. Any scheme in situ does not alter the way I consider the merits of the proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is two storey semi detached former cottage style property which is now in commercial use. It has a range of rear projections and is sited one property away from being alongside a busy and very varied central cross-roads in Whitton. These are a focal point for commercial and retail properties of different eras and design, in a form which is generally visually unremarkable, and which then mainly run south down High Street Whitton towards the station. Beyond the appeal property, up Hounslow Road to the north the character of the area is primarily low key residential in nature. The proposal is
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effectively for the conversion of an upper floor rear catslide roof element into a flat roof by building upward and outward in a rectangular fashion. The projection is around 3.5 metres in length. The works would create a more useful store and a Gents WC.

5. The Council is concerned that the proposal by reason of its design, siting and scale would be obtrusive, prominent and incongruous in terms of the host building and surrounding area.
6. Certainly this proposal would not lead to the most elegant of rear extensions nevertheless given the context I would say it ranked towards the innocuous end of any assessment scale. The fact is that this property has only a limited angle of public realm view and that is from Nelson Road 'round the corner' and with distance, such varied roof forms in the vicinity, and paraphernalia such as large scale extractor piping, advertisements, hoarding and so forth it would hardly be registered. There is a tradition of considerable flat roofing in place locally which is benign in the scene and in any event the principal pitched roof shape of the property would still register visually. The existing ground floor further projecting pitched roof element would help to assimilate the new works. Any view from neighbours would very much be side-on and not a principal outlook.
7. The true domestic scale type of properties starts beyond the appeal premises to the north. This and the neighbouring property is a commercial 'block' and I do recognise that improved space is in line with the Council's policy aim to promote small business growth and that this adds some weight in favour of the scheme. The scheme has been effectively designed to achieve this space with the minimum of works.
8. In summary, the appeal scheme would not be incongruous or jarring on the eye; it would be suitably subservient to the host property and inoffensive in the streetscene.
9. Local Plan Policies LP1 and LP8, taken together and amongst other matters, call for protection of local distinctiveness with good quality design and suitable scale and massing sympathetic to a site and its context and of a form which would not intrude upon amenity for neighbours. This is reflected in the objectives of the Council's Whitton and Heathfield Village Character Area SPD (SPD) and its focus on recognition of local character and achieving design quality, albeit this document cannot be expected to cover every eventuality. In all the circumstances I conclude that the proposal would not conflict with pertinent development plan policies or the aesthetic purposes of the SPD.

Conditions

10. The Council suggests condition requiring development to be in matching materials and in accordance with listed, approved, plans. Given that the materials are annotated on the submitted plans only the latter is necessary.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would not have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property or the locality. Accordingly the appeal is allowed.

D Cramond INSPECTOR