



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2019 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Andrew Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/19/3227636

Flat 8, 30 Belmont House, Belmont Road, Twickenham, Richmond-Upon-Thames TW2 5DA

- 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 Robert Coldray against the decision of Richmond Upon Thames London Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0346/FUL, dated 28 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 15 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension to create dormer window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The postcode as written on the application form is incorrect. I have therefore used the postcode as written on the appeal form, which is correct.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Building of Townscape Merit (BTM) and the character and appearance of the Belmont Road Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal property comprises a self-contained unit on the second floor of a three-storey detached building located at the end of a cul-de-sac. It is a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM) which lies within the Belmont Road Conservation Area.
 6. The Belmont Road Conservation Area covers a section of Belmont Road, and its significance lies in part in the distinctive and attractive appearance of the buildings within it. Indeed, the street is characterised by mostly unspoilt detached Victorian 'villas' unified by their common use of materials, such as facades and boundary walls of white stucco render, shallow slate roofs,
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moulded window surrounds, and set within large mature garden plots with important gaps between buildings.

7. No. 30 contributes positively to the significance of the conservation area as its detailing, arrangement and materials, illustrates the street's Victorian 'villa' phase of growth. It is finished with white stucco render and displays a shallow hipped slate roof form roughly aligned and similar to the roofs of the neighbouring properties on Belmont Road.
8. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this respect national policy on heritage assets, which includes conservation areas, is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At paragraph 185, it sets out matters which should be taken into account including sustaining and enhancing the significance of the heritage asset and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Also paragraph 197 states that the effect of development on non-designated heritage assets should also be taken into account.
9. The proposal would result in the formation of a rear dormer window roof extension within the existing lounge of the flat. I find that the scale of the proposed dormer would be excessive in the context of the roof, and would be visually obtrusive. Furthermore, the addition of the dormer window would alter the shape and distinctive shallow profile of the roof. As the roof form is a significant element defining the appearance of the BTM and of the other properties within the conservation area, it is considered that the proposal would result in an incongruous addition to the property that would fail to appear sympathetic and in keeping with its surroundings. I find that the proposed dormer would disrupt the architectural character of the conservation area and the historic integrity of the BTM.
10. The appearance and architectural character of the more modern urban fabric surrounding the conservation area, such as along Campbell Road and including the dormer windows there, does not justify unsympathetic alterations to a historically important building within the conservation area. I therefore do not accord any material weight to this point.
11. The other dormers referenced by the appellant are not directly comparable. 21 Belmont Road is an end-of-terrace brick-built house which is not characterised by a distinctive shallow hipped roof, and Nos. 4,6 and 8 form part of a modern building which differs considerably from the architectural features of the rendered Victorian 'villas'. No. 2 is not located within the Belmont Road Conservation Area. These therefore do not affect my view that the proposal would appear obtrusive and adversely impact the BTM and conservation area. In any event, each application and appeal should be determined on its individual merits, and this is the approach that I have adopted.
12. Furthermore, whilst the dormer roof extension may improve the living conditions for the existing occupiers, this private benefit does not outweigh the harm the proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the BTM and the conservation area. The harm to the significance of the conservation area as a designated asset would be less than substantial, but there are no public benefits to outweigh this harm.

13. I conclude the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Building of Townscape Merit and the Belmont Road Conservation Area. It would therefore be in conflict with policy LP1 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan (the 'local plan') which seeks to ensure proposals are well designed and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area in which they lie. It would also be in conflict with policies LP3 and LP4 of the local plan, the Buildings of Townscape Merit Supplementary Planning Document, the Belmont Road Conservation Areas 29 document, and guidance in the NPPF which together seek to ensure heritage assets are preserved and enhanced.

Recommendation

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

15. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR