



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 September 2019

by S Hunt BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/19/3228161

2B Lebanon Park Mansions, Richmond Road, Twickenham TW1 3BH

- 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 Oliver Narraway against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 19/0417/FUL, dated 6 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'The planning application is for external and internal alterations to an existing top floor flat. The proposal is for the raising of the roof slope over the existing offshoot to create increased headroom plus the installation of a roof terrace. 4 new Velux's will be installed to the front roof slope plus the replacement of the existing Velux'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations to the roof including raising of the roof slope to the rear, installation of a roof terrace and rooflights at 2B Lebanon Park Mansions, Richmond Road, Twickenham TW1 3BH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/0417/FUL, dated 6 February 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council altered the description of the development to read 'Alterations to the roof including raising of the roof slope to the rear, installation of a roof terrace and rooflights'. This is more precise than that given on the application form therefore I have dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed roof extension and rooflights would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Twickenham Riverside Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The site lies within the Twickenham Riverside Conservation Area. I have a statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

5. The appeal site is the top floor apartment of a three storey terraced town house fronting Richmond Road. Together with a neighbouring terrace of very similar properties (with shop fronts at ground floor) it forms the entrance to Lebanon Park, a distinctive street of well-proportioned Edwardian houses. The area is of mixed character with both commercial and residential properties along Richmond Road. The buildings opposite are smaller, more domestic scale cottages, which emphasises the height of the two terraces in the street scene.
6. Both terraces appear to have been little altered externally, particularly on the upper levels. The Twickenham Riverside and Queens Road Conservation Area Study 1998 notes the buildings above shop front level to be of 'unremarkable design', however the original fenestration remains to both terraces together with their distinctive stucco cornice and eaves brackets seen throughout Lebanon Park. The appeal site, together with its neighbours within the terrace, makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole.
7. The proposals are related to the conversion of the existing loft space to provide additional living accommodation for the top floor apartment. In order to achieve the required ceiling heights alterations to the roof profile are proposed to the rear. The existing rear roof slope would be raised, resulting in a shallower angled roof. A small roof terrace with glazed screen would be created above the adjacent projection to provide some outdoor space. Five conservation style rooflights are proposed to the front, and two to the rear. The principal facing elevations would be unaltered.
8. Section 8 of the Council's supplementary planning document (SPD) 'House Extensions and External Alterations' 2015 advises that roof extensions should be avoided to the front of a house, and that they should be in scale with the existing structure, without projecting above the ridgeline. They should not dominate the original roof and be sensitive to the existing character. Excessive use of rooflights is discouraged as being visually disruptive and it is preferable that they are conservation type.
9. The roof extension would be to the rear of the terrace where no. 2 is not readily visible from public view. The difference in roof design to the remainder of the terrace would only be discernible from limited locations within the gardens of the nearest dwellings along Lebanon Park, many of which are screened by mature vegetation. It would not project above the ridgeline.
10. Roof extensions and rooflights are not unusual in the immediate area; there are dormer windows to numerous properties on Lebanon Park, and I observed a wide variety of rooflights on front roof slopes. This includes the very similar terrace at the opposite side of the entrance to Lebanon Park which contains a multitude of rooflights, larger in scale than those proposed.
11. Nonetheless, I observed that these rooflights are not unduly dominant within the street scene and do not harm the character or appearance of the area. The proposed rooflights at no. 2B would be smaller, and large expanses of slate roof would remain as the dominant feature of the roof. A condition could ensure they are the conservation type roof lights.

12. My attention has been drawn to an appeal decision at 25 Lebanon Park¹ and other proposals for roof alterations in the locality. However none of these schemes appear to be directly comparable to the appeal proposals. The three storey terraces on Richmond Road differ in their scale and design to those along Lebanon Park, with their distinctive projecting gables. The host property differs in that it has a much simpler and less steeply sloping roof. Whilst no less attractive, its roof does not dominate the street scene and impact on area character as much as those along Lebanon Park do.
13. Alterations to the roof to no.2 would be unobtrusive when viewed from street level, and would assimilate effectively into the host building without any significant harmful effects. I consider the impact of the proposals to preserve both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, without harm to its significance.
14. Consequently, I find the proposals would comply with the provisions of Policy LP1 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Publication Local Plan incorporating Main Modifications 2018 which requires a high standard of architectural and urban design quality which is compatible with local character, and Policy LP3 which at part C requires proposals in Conservation Areas to preserve and where possible enhance the character or the appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposals would also be broadly consistent with the advice set out in section 8 of the Councils SPD.
15. The policies are in conformity with sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of achieving well-designed places and in relation to consideration of impact on heritage assets.

Other Matters

16. I understand the concerns of adjoining occupiers regarding potential disruption during the proposed works. However this would be short term and could be mitigated by careful construction management.
17. The proposed roof terrace would be largely screened by the walls and roof of the existing buildings. Any potential overlooking would be minimised by the proposed glazed screening, which a condition could ensure is opaque glazed.

Conditions

18. I have undertaken some minor editing of the Council's conditions for precision and clarity. I have attached a standard time limit condition and a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty.
19. In order to respect of the character and appearance of the existing building and the Conservation Area the rooflights should be the traditional conservation style. The Council's condition is not precise therefore I have altered it to require details to be provided prior to their installation. I have included a condition to ensure that the materials of the roof extension match the existing, to ensure it is in keeping with the existing building and its surroundings.
20. A glazed screen is proposed to the roof terrace. To minimise potential overlooking a condition requiring it to be obscure glazed is necessary.

¹ APP/L5810/D/17/3187577

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

S Hunt

INSPECTOR

Schedule of 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 plans :

111 & 111a	Proposed Floor Plan and Roof Plan
112 & 112a	Proposed Elevation and Section
113 & 113a	Proposed Elevations
114a	Proposed Elevations
- 3) Prior to the first installation of any of the rooflights, details of the type (to be conservation style) and colour shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and shall be installed and retained as approved.
- 4) The external surfaces of the roof extension hereby permitted shall match those on the upper floors and roof of the existing building.
- 5) The screening panels to the roof terrace hereby approved shall be fitted with obscure glazing and shall be retained unless an alternative screen is previously agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

End of Schedule.