
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 October 2019

by David Murray BA (Hons) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/19/3237468

21 Mays Road, Teddington, London, TW11 0SQ.

- 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 and Mrs S Pitt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref. 19/1668/HOT, dated 24 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a double storey and single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property, as a Building of Townscape Merit, and its setting in the Hampton Wick and Teddington (Mays Road) Conservation Area 42.
3. The planning officer assessment of the case also refers to a concern about the effect on the living conditions of neighbours but as this concern did not form part of a formal reason for refusal I have not included it as a main issue.

Reasons

Background

4. The appeal site comprises a two storey semi-detached property which lies in a residential area of similar properties. These are of a 'cottage style' design of houses with light coloured rendered elevations. It is proposed to add a two storey rear extension with a single storey one attached.
5. The planning officer's report highlights the nature of the Conservation Area which is also described in the Conservation Area appraisal statement. The significance of this heritage asset relates to the defined area being a cohesive planned estate of public housing designed in accordance with Garden City Principles and where the individual houses adopt an Old English cottage style of roughcast walls and steeply pitched roofs with gables, small integral dormer windows, chimneys and porches. The property is listed in the Village Character Area as a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM).

Effect on character and appearance

6. In assessing this issue I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the heritage asset of the Conservation Area.
7. The host semi-detached property is mostly of its original form and it contributes positively to the significance of the Conservation Area, although I noted roof lights in the rear facing roof slope which suggest it has accommodation at second floor level. The proposed extension would be at the rear of the property and therefore away from the public realm and only a slight glimpse of the proposed extension would be seen from the street frontage through the gap with No.19. However, the architectural and historical significance of the property is not just in its appreciation from the front and the building must be seen as a whole, especially given its status as a BTM.
8. I agree with the Council that the form and design of the extension put forward detract from the attractive character of the original design. The extension with a roof line that continues from that of the main house, would visually overpower the narrow gable end and cat-slide roof. Further, the width and roof slope of the new gable would contrast sharply with the prevailing design of the original property. Even though matching materials and fenestration are proposed, I find that the scale of addition would be out of proportion with the simple and modest form of the existing cottage style and materially interrupt the symmetry of the host building and its attached neighbour.
9. These factors indicate that the proposal would harm rather than preserve or enhance the character and the appearance of the host building and its setting in the conservation area. The proposal would conflict with the requirements of Local Plan policies LP1, in that the development would not maintain the general character of the area, and LP3 regarding the protection of the heritage asset.
10. The Council assessed the harm that would be caused as 'substantial harm', but in terms of the effect of the significance of the heritage asset I find that it should be seen as 'less than substantial' harm and that paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) applies. Nevertheless, it has not been demonstrated that this harm would be outweighed by any public benefits or that the extensions are necessary to secure an optimum viable use for the property. Moreover, paragraph 193 of the NPPF makes clear that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation whatever the level of harm that applies.
11. In the planning balance I have taken account of the fact that two neighbours wrote to support the proposal at application stage and the existing alterations to other properties in the locality mentioned by the appellants' agent. Even so, the factors in favour of the proposal do not outweigh the conflict with the development plan and the harm to the heritage asset that I have identified. This indicates that the appeal should not be allowed.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Murray

INSPECTOR