



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 March 2020

by S Dean MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/19/3243414

25 Cranmer Road, Hampton Hill, TW12 1DN

- 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 Akash Gandhi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 19/2503/FUL, dated 13 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 17 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as "the proposed demolition of existing house and construction of new dwelling".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on i) the character and appearance of the area, ii) the setting and significance of the non-designated heritage asset, and iii) the living conditions of occupiers of 27 Cranmer Road with regard to visual intrusion and any overbearing effect.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. As a detached hipped-roof bungalow at the end of a row of semi-detached, two-storey houses, the appeal site already appears somewhat at odds with the character of Cranmer Road and similar roads nearby such as Burtons Road and Lindsay Road. The site also adjoins 78 Park Road (No 78), an attractive and substantial building in brick under slate which the Council has designated as a building of townscape merit (BTM), a non-designated heritage asset in the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
4. The proposed dwelling is two-storey, with a hipped roof, ground floor porch and projecting bay, matching the height of the neighbouring property at 27 Cranmer Road (No 27). In my view, the proposal would not appear excessively bulky or large, nor do I consider that it would be visually intrusive in the street-scene. Long views of the site are limited by surrounding development and in any event, the proposal would be viewed in the context of the neighbouring properties which are of a similar scale.
5. I acknowledge the comment of the Council that gaps between the buildings in the street have an important role to play in its character. However, given the

current arrangement, I do not consider that the appeal proposal would affect these gaps to such a degree to cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area.

6. Given its context I consider that the form, scale and overall design of the appeal proposal would appear consistent with, and appropriate to the character of Cranmer Road and would not give rise to the harm identified by the Council.
7. The proposal would therefore comply with Policies LP1 and LP39 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan 2018 (the Local Plan). These policies seek, amongst other things to ensure that new development is of a quality which maintains and contributes to the existing quality and character of an area, respects the existing townscape, scale, height, massing, density, proportions, form, plot widths, spacing and reflects the character of the surrounding area. The proposal would also comply with the aim of the Framework to achieve well-designed places.

Setting and significance of the non-designated heritage asset

8. As a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM), No 78 is a non-designated heritage asset, and whilst of a lower status than designated heritage assets, the Framework requires that the significance of it should be taken into account and a balanced judgement should be made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
9. I acknowledge that the appeal proposal would increase the size of the building immediately adjacent to the BTM, No 78. However, I do not consider that this would in itself be harmful to the setting of No 78. The existing building on the appeal site is already markedly different to No 78, and in my view, in the relationship between the two buildings, it is already clear that the bungalow on the appeal site is of a different character to No 78 and Park Road more widely. Cranmer Road already appears distinct from and different to the buildings on Park Road. As noted above, the increased size of the building on the appeal site would not be significantly taller or bulkier than others on Cranmer Road. The proposal would lead to the loss of the open driveway to the side of the boundary with No 78. However, No 78 itself is set some distance from the boundary and as a result, I do not consider that the proposal would reduce the space between the proposal and No 78 to such a degree as to harm its setting.
10. As a result, I consider that the proposal would not cause harm to the setting of, and by extension, the significance of No 78 as a non-designated heritage asset. The proposal would therefore comply with Policies LP1 and LP4 of the Local Plan, which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that new development is of a quality which maintains and contributes to the existing quality and character of an area, and preserves the significance, character and setting of non-designated heritage assets. The proposal would also comply with the guidance in the Hampton Hill Village Planning Guidance, draft Supplementary Planning Document March 2017, and the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Supplementary Planning Document Buildings of Townscape Merit 2015, both of which add detail to the Local Plan policies identified above, and seek to retain and protect the existing quality, features and character of the area and the BTMs within it. The proposal would also comply with guidance in the Framework on conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Living conditions

11. The appeal proposal would increase the overall height and size of the appeal site immediately adjacent to the boundary with No 27. I acknowledge that most of the other properties on this side of the road are of a similar scale to the appeal proposal. However, they are broadly in line with each other, whereas the appeal proposal is deeper in plan form, causing it to project beyond the rear of No 27. The proposal would appear slightly longer, but significantly taller and bulkier than the existing building.
12. In my opinion, the additional scale and mass of the appeal proposal, coupled with its length and the orientation of the properties in the street would cause an unacceptable level of visual intrusion and overbearing to the occupiers of No 27. I note the reference on the application drawings and appellants statement to the 45-degree line drawn from the neighbouring first-floor window. However, this does not overcome my concern at the overall effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of the neighbouring property.
13. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy LP8 of the Local Plan and the guidance in the Small and Medium Housing Sites SPD, both of which seek, amongst other things, to protect the amenity and living conditions for occupants of new, existing and adjoining properties, minimise visual intrusion of new development, and guard against unacceptable visual intrusion and overbearing arising from new development.

Conclusion

14. Although I have found that the proposal is acceptable with regards to its effect on the character and appearance of the area, and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset, I have also found that the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal is contrary to the development plan and there are no other material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate a decision be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Dean

INSPECTOR