
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2021

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 August 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/21/3270771

5 Wrights Walk, Mortlake, London SW14 8EU

- 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 G Pettigrew against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 20/3480/HOT, dated 4 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension at the rear of the property, extend existing hip roof and install new conservation rooflight and lantern light to existing single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for first floor extension at the rear of the property, extend existing hip roof and install new conservation rooflight and lantern light to existing single storey extension at 5 Wrights Walk, Mortlake, London SW14 8EU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/3480/HOT, dated 4 December 2020, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) No new external finishes (including fenestration), including works of making good, shall be carried out other than in materials as submitted.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans Drawings 1536.01; and 1536.02.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed first-floor rear extension on the character and appearance of the host property, the Mortlake Conservation Area and the nearby Buildings of Townscape Merit.

Reasons

3. 5 Wrights Walk (No.5) is one of a pair of semi-detached houses (with No.6 Wrights Walk) on the eastern side of Wrights Walk. No.5 is accessed only by foot from Wrights Walk which runs between North Worple Way and Vineyard Path. No.5 is within the Mortlake Conservation Area (CA) and is identified by the Council as a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM).

4. In accordance with the statutory duty imposed by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I am required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the CA. This part of the CA is principally characterised by the narrow path of Wrights Walk, which provides a secluded and intimate setting for the attractive pairs of semi-detached cottages. Part of the character is derived from the appearance of the front elevations of the cottages, with arched windows, set behind generous front gardens. The rear elevations of houses on Wrights Walk are not visible from the public realm, only seen from a small number of terraced houses that front Victoria Road, and make a very limited contribution to the character or appearance of the CA.
5. No.5 sits to the rear of its plot. There is an existing ground floor extension up to the rear boundary and a courtyard garden and detached garden office to the side. The proposal is to extend at first-floor level by around 1.95m from the rear elevation over the full width of the house, extending the hipped roof and incorporating a dormer to improve the internal headroom of two bedrooms. The proposed dormer extends only part of the width of the rear elevation and would have a section of flat roof, which I recognise is not a form typical of the area or reflects the existing roof profile of No.5. However, the scale of the flat roof would be relatively limited and has been designed so that it aligns with the eaves of the original building. Combined with the extension to the hipped roof, it would not appear unsympathetic to, or dominate, the existing roof and its original profile would still be legible and appreciated.
6. I note that the extension is proposed to be finished in render, rather than the yellow stock brick construction of the original house, but I consider this an acceptable way to distinguish between the old and new that would complement the modern ground floor extension. The existing style and pattern of windows on the rear elevation will also be replicated, albeit the window closest to the party wall with No.6 would be larger. I do not therefore find that the proposed extension, even in combination with the existing ground floor extension, would appear incongruous or detract from the intrinsic character of the original house as a of BTM.
7. Because of the siting of the host house at the rear of its plot, the extension would not be particularly visible even from the garden of No.5 itself. There would be very limited views of the rear corner of the extended roof from Wrights Walk but I am satisfied that there would be no material change to the appearance of the house from the public realm and no harm to the character and appearance of the CA I have described above.
8. The Council have referred in their decision to the proposed development having a negative impact on nearby BTMs. I have not been provided with any information regarding nearby BTMs, nor am I aware of any, save No.6 Wrights Walk. However, given my conclusions regarding the absence of harm to the host house and CA and I am not persuaded that there would be a significant impact on other nearby houses, in terms of their character and appearance.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the host house, the Mortlake CA, and the surrounding area in general. Consequently, there would be no conflict with Policies LP1, LP3 and LP4 of the Local Plan (2018) which seek to ensure developments are a high quality of design, compatible with local character,

including existing townscape, and would preserve the character and appearance of the CA and BTM. There would also be no conflict with the guidance in the Local Plan *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and External Alterations* (2015) because the extension would not dominate the original roof and would be sensitive to the existing character.

Conditions

10. I have imposed a standard condition relating to the commencement of development and a condition specifying the relevant plans as this provides certainty. To safeguard the character and appearance of the area I have imposed a condition concerning materials.
11. The Council have suggested a condition restricting any part of the roof hereby approved to be used as a balcony or terrace. The extent of the flat roof is very limited and its location relative to the hipped roof means that it is far from accessible. I do not therefore find such a condition to be necessary.
12. The Council have also suggested conditions relating to the type of equipment or vehicles used during onsite construction and the submission, approval of a fire safety strategy. Given the modest scale of the proposed extension, I do not consider that the planning permission should be dependent on such restrictions or requirements, and they are not necessary in planning terms.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude the appeal is allowed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR