

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 November 2021

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 November 2021

**Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/21/3276900
173B, Mortlake Road, London, TW9 4AW**

- 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 Sarah Bower against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 21/0145/FUL, dated 27 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 24 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is garage conversion into granny annex.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of the proposed development is taken from the application form. The Council, in its decision notice, described the proposed development as a "replacement outbuilding for use as ancillary residential accommodation to existing dwelling."
3. The appeal property is located close to Number 179 Lower Mortlake Road, a Grade II Listed Building. The Council has not raised any concerns in respect of the proposed development impacting on this heritage asset such that the proposal would fail to conserve it.
4. One of the Council's reasons for refusal refers to the absence of a parking survey. A Parking Study has since been produced and submitted in support of the proposal. This addresses matters set out by the Council and concludes that there is no parking or other transport reason why the proposal should not be permitted. Taking this into account, the main issue in this case is that set out below.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. Number 173B Mortlake Road forms part of a two storey residential building which has been divided into flats and is set well back from Mortlake Road,
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behind a long footpath leading from a brick pedestrian gateway feature. Adjacent to this gateway is a small, low single storey garage.

7. The appeal property is recognised as a building of townscape merit and I observed during my site visit that there is a visual gap between the property and Mortlake Road, such that it can be observed in wider views.
8. Both the gateway and the garage themselves are set back from Mortlake Road, behind a driveway/parking area. The low single storey garage is located adjacent to Number 171 Mortlake Road, a detached two storey dwelling.
9. The appeal property is located in a largely residential area characterised by the presence of dwellings within a green and leafy setting, where grass verges, hedges, trees and garden areas afford a considerable sense of spaciousness, enhanced by visual gaps in front of and occasionally alongside, dwellings.
10. It is proposed to replace the low single storey garage with a new two storey outbuilding for ancillary residential accommodation. The proposed development would have a greater footprint than the garage – it would be wider and substantially longer and taller than the existing building.
11. I find that the scale of the proposed development would combine with its distinctly residential appearance - with a pitched roof, the ridge height of which would extend above the eaves of No 171 adjacent - to draw attention to itself as a large domestic building. Whereas currently, the low single storey garage appears as a modest and wholly ancillary feature, the proposed development would fail to appear as a subordinate or ancillary building, but would be seen as a large and unduly prominent addition.
12. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated by the proposed materials. The black timber and black aluminium fenestration proposed would fail to reflect the fenestration and brick materials of surrounding buildings and as such, would serve to draw further attention to the proposal as an incongruous feature, out of place within and unsympathetic to, its surroundings.
13. In addition to all of the above, the overall size and incongruous appearance of the building would result in it appearing as a large and dominant feature. This would erode the spacious gap between Mortlake Road and the appeal property, to the detriment of the area's spacious qualities.
14. Taking everything into account, I consider that the proposal would harm local character, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Local Plan¹ Policies LP1, LP4 and LP39; and to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions and Alterations (2015), which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

¹ Reference: Richmond upon Thames Local Plan (2018).