

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/21/3280460

29 The Avenue, Twickenham, TW1 1QU

- 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 A George against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 21/0657/HOT, 23 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is re-configuration and extension of conservatory/orangery to the side of the dwelling house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located at the junction of St George's Road and The Avenue. It is a designated Building of Townscape Merit and is situated in a residential area within the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area.
 4. The distinctive character of the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area derives from the development of the area as a single estate in the park of St Margaret's House, being developed along early garden suburb lines making 'material advantage' of the old park. A variety of Victorian and later house styles are represented and the area is particularly characterised by the presence of two storey detached and semi-detached dwellings, with ornate features including intricate brick and stucco details, set within garden plots.
 5. As a Building of Townscape Merit, the appeal property makes a positive contribution to the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area as an example of the Arts and Crafts style, with projecting gables and an interesting roof form. Further, the land around the building contributes to the notable spacious qualities of the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area.
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6. The proposed development would result in the replacement and considerable enlargement of a conservatory providing a link between the main part of the appeal property and a single storey coach house.
7. In so doing, I find that the proposed expanded first floor element, which would introduce mezzanine area, would result in the creation of a large, prominent and widely visible first floor area. The harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the first floor area appearing considerably different to the ground floor area – to the extent that the two levels would jar with one another. In this way, the proposal would draw attention to itself as an incongruous feature.
8. Further to the above, I find that the enlargement of the conservatory would serve to introduce considerable visual clutter between the main body of the appeal property and the coach house. It would reduce the space between those two elements and this would be to the detriment of the spacious attributes of the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area.
9. Whilst I am mindful that walls to the front of the appeal property serve to restrict public views to some extent, the height of the proposed development combined with the location of the appeal property on a prominent corner would result in the proposal appearing visible and conspicuous in its surroundings.
10. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed development would fail to conserve the appearance of the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area. Having regard to paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and to Planning Practice Guidance, I consider that the harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial. This needs to be balanced against any public benefits the development may bring.
11. In this respect, whilst I recognise that the proposal is intended to improve the appellant's living environment, there is no substantial evidence to demonstrate that there are any benefits that would amount to such public benefits that they would outweigh the harm identified.
12. Consequently, I find that the proposal would fail to conserve the character and appearance of the St Margaret's Estate Conservation Area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Local Plan¹ Policies LP1, LP3 and LP4, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Conclusion

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

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

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