
Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 22 September 2021 by Elizabeth Davies BSc (Hons) MIEMA, CEnv

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/W/20/3262234

61A Sheen Lane, London, SW14 8AB

- 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 Simon Marsh against the decision of Richmond Upon Thames London Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/1508/FUL, dated 5 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is ground floor rear and side extensions. Rear mansard roof extensions with dormer to rear and roof to outrigger. 2 no. rooflights to front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework. Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy as a material consideration in my decision-making, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.
4. The description of the development on the planning application form is incorrect. I have taken the wording used on the appeal forms and the Council's decision, in the above header as it accurately describes the proposal.
5. The proposed development includes front facing rooflights and a single storey rear extension and the Council raise no concerns in respect of these elements of the development. I have however considered the concerns raised by a resident on Howgate Road including loss of visual amenity and increased noise pollution from the proposed rear extension.

6. I note that there is a high fence demarcating the common boundary between the appeal property and the properties on Howgate Road. However, given the distance from the proposed rear extension, the single storey height and the presence of fencing on the common boundary, I am satisfied that the outlook of the occupiers of these properties would not be materially affected by the proposal. Whilst there could be some indirect effects during the construction process, in terms of noise and disturbance, these will be short term and not likely to be significant. Having regard to the residential nature of the appeal property, the proposed extension would not lead to unacceptable noise disturbance once constructed.

Main Issue

7. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the terrace and the Sheen Lane (Mortlake) Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

8. The CA is a busy mixed commercial and residential area, with the majority of buildings within the CA dating from the mid-19th century onwards. The appeal property is part of a terrace of four, two-storey properties fronting Sheen Lane. Three of the four properties in the terrace, including the appeal property, feature ground floor commercial uses, with residential accommodation at the rear ground floor and first floor level, the property immediately to the south of the appeal property is wholly in residential use.
9. The appeal property and the adjoining building in the terrace (No. 59 Sheen Lane) have been locally designated as Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM). Their significance derives from their well-proportioned Edwardian architectural features and their group value as part of a terrace of Edwardian buildings.
10. The elements of the proposal the Council have objected to (the mansard roof extension and dormers) are located at the rear of the property. Whilst I appreciate that much of the group value of the terrace and the BTM pair is experienced from the front facade, part of the rear of the terrace, including the first floor and roof of the appeal property is visible from Vernon Road. When viewed from the rear, the properties in the terrace, including the BTM pair are of a similar scale and design, and although recognising there have been some previous alterations, there is a clear sense of rhythm and uniformity provided at roof level. I therefore consider that both the front and rear of the appeal property makes a positive contribution to the CA.
11. The proposed rear mansard roof extension is substantial and would occupy the entire roof slope of the appeal property and extend over the side roofslope of an existing outrigger. Although the ridge height would be lower than that of the host property, this would be insufficient to alleviate the imposing and disproportionate nature of the extension. Furthermore, I do not consider that the scale and positioning of the dormer windows in line with the windows at first floor alleviates the more fundamental issues of scale and design of the proposed mansard roof extension.
12. I have acknowledged that some variation between the terrace properties at the rear does exist, including modifications to chimneys, ground floor extensions and existing dormers at No. 57 and No.59. However, these are not prominent

features and do not detract from the overall character and appearance of the rear of the terrace. By contrast, the style and scale of the proposed mansard roof and dormers would completely alter the rear roofscape, resulting in the appeal property appearing out of keeping with the other properties in the terrace. I note the appellants comments in relation to the views from Vernon Road of the appeal site being outside the CA boundary. However, the view that is experienced and the harm that would occur is within the CA boundary so this does not in any way lessen or negate the impact.

13. The proposed rear mansard extension would also cause unacceptable disharmony with the adjoining BTM (No. 59). Whilst the pair of BTM are not identical, No.59 features a dormer window and a ground floor rear extension, these alterations are more in keeping with the form of the original pair and do not disrupt the visual balance of the properties at first floor and roof level in the way the proposed roof alterations would.
14. With regard to extensions and alterations in the wider area, including Sheen Lane and Howgate Road which the appellant has drawn my attention to, it is accepted that a number of buildings in the vicinity have undergone alterations including the addition of dormer windows and these feature in views of the CA. It is also acknowledged that some of these buildings are BTM. However, the assessment of harm in this case relates to the effect of the proposal on the host dwelling and its relationship within a BTM pair and as part of a short terrace of properties. The specific circumstances of the appeal site are not replicated in the wider area. I have therefore not attached any significant weight to the examples provided in support of the development.
15. The proposed mansard roof extension and dormers would detract from the character of the host property, the BTM pair, the terrace, and the CA as a whole. The proposed development would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the CA.
16. The proposed development would be contrary to Policy LP1, LP3 and LP4 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan (July 2018) which seek, amongst other things, to ensure development maintains the high-quality character and heritage of the borough. Policy LP1 states that proposals should be compatible with local character, including the relationship to existing townscape, development pattern, views, local grain as well as scale, proportions and massing. Policy LP3 requires that development conserves and where possible makes a positive contribution to the historic environment and should preserve and where possible enhance the character or the appearance of Conservation Areas. Policy LP4 seeks to ensure development preserves and where possible enhance, the significance, character and setting of BTM.
17. The harm to the CA would be less than substantial and in such instances paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, although there would be a private benefit to the appellant from the proposed development, there are no public benefits to weigh against the less than substantial harm to the CA.

Other Matters

18. It is acknowledged that the appellant has sought to address the Council's concerns with this proposal from comments received on a previously refused scheme, but I must consider the proposal and evidence before me.
19. The reasons for the appellant wishing to extend the appeal property and the difficulties experienced in letting the property are understood, however these considerations do not outweigh the harm identified.

Conclusion and Recommendation

20. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elizabeth Davies

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

21. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR