
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2022

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 27TH July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/22/3299764

12 Townshend Road, Richmond upon Thames TW9 1XH

- 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 Cunningham against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref DC/DPA/22/0798/HOT, dated 10 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is the installation of an air source heat pump in the front garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area and building of townscape merit.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to this 3-storey, semi-detached house which is identified by the Council as a Building of Townscape Merit (BTM), along with its attached neighbour at No 10, and is situated within the Sheen Road Conservation Area. The property is an attractive and elegant brick building.
4. The frontage of the house is hard-surfaced with tarmac and is used for car parking, although at the time of my site visit works were being undertaken to the house and materials stored on the frontage. Planning permission exists (Ref: 22/0200/HOT) which includes alterations to the frontage to involving some landscaping, stone paving, walling and a bin enclosure.
5. The appeal scheme would envisage the installation of the pump apparatus to one side of the front garden set close to the boundary with No 10. It would have a utilitarian appearance, being box-like and set on a concrete base. Although it would not be as tall as the adjacent fence, I consider that it would have an obvious and intrusive appearance when seen from the front of the property, especially when no cars are present.
6. The proposal has a design that would not assimilate with the traditional appearance and qualities of the Conservation area and the BTM. It would appear harsh, functional and out of place within this attractive townscape. As a

result, I consider that it would fail to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would not preserve the qualities of the BTM

7. I accept that the frontage of many properties accommodate bins but these are not always intrusively sited and are movable features; these do not justify the proposed feature, in my judgement.
8. The appellants indicate that the approved alterations to the frontage of the property would bring about a considerable improvement to the property and the area. I do not dispute this. If the approved scheme were to go ahead, the proposed heat pump would be sited next to the bin store and would be slightly smaller than it. Although the appellants indicate that the approved alterations will go ahead, there is no guarantee that this will be the case and there is no certainty that the appeal scheme would not be undertaken in isolation and so I have to consider the possibility that the appeal proposal may be undertaken by itself, if the appeal were to be approved. If this were to be the case, the proposal would be clearly unacceptable in my judgement, for the reasons set out. Even if I were to consider it within the context of the approved alterations, whilst its unacceptable effects would be lessened somewhat, I still consider that it would have an unacceptable effect on the area and property.
9. In relation to the benefits of the proposed heat pump, I acknowledge that there is a benefit in the form of the renewable energy source that it represents. However, I have been presented with no evidence to suggest that this benefit should necessarily involve placing the heat pump in this specific location where it would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area.
10. I have taken account of all other matters referred to in the representations but I find that that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area and the BTM and there are no public benefits sufficient to outweigh that harm. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to Policies LP1, LP3 and LP4 of the LBRUT Local Plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR