
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2022

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/22/3298584

1 Hereford Gardens, Twickenham TW2 6PR

- 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 Blewitt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.
 - The application Ref 21/4433/HOT, dated 23 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is a hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer, new front first floor window and new pitched roof on existing 2-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer, new front first floor window and new pitched roof on existing 2-storey side extension at 1 Hereford Gardens, Twickenham TW2 6PR in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/4433/HOT, dated 23 December 2021, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule to this decision.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached house within a residential cul-de-sac of similar dwellings. From what I saw, several properties that address Hereford Gardens and nearby streets have been extended and externally altered including sizeable and prominent roof level additions. Consequently, there is some variety to the existing built form within the street scene and the local area to which the site belongs.
4. The proposed hip to gable extension would use materials to match those of the existing building. It would reflect the style of the main roof at 2 Hereford Gardens, which is attached to No 1 and includes a gable end. In doing so, the appeal scheme would restore a greater sense of balance to the upper front elevation of this pair that is currently disrupted because No 1 maintains its original hipped roof to the main house. Several other properties on Hereford Gardens have hip to gable extensions, as do other dwellings along nearby roads. The effect of these changes has diluted any strong sense of uniformity and consistency in the roof forms of buildings within the local area.

5. In many situations, the new rear dormer would be regarded as an overly large and bulky addition to the house particularly considering the guidelines for this type of development set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *House Extensions and External Alterations* (SPD). It would significantly add to the scale and mass of the building in an elevated position and cover most of the main roof. The new dormer windows would also be larger than those immediately below. As a result, the appeal scheme would conflict with some of the advice within the SPD.
6. However, in this case, the proposal would be seen together with the sizeable dormer on the rear roof slope of No 2 and it would be no taller than its existing counterpart. In that context, the additional built form at roof level would provide an effective counterbalance to No 2. None of the new dormer would be seen from the road. Despite its high-level position, it would also be largely screened when viewed from the rear of nearby properties mainly by established vegetation. Furthermore, I also observed that some buildings close to the site include large rear dormer extensions that are visible from the street. As such, a large dormer, as proposed, would not be incompatible in its context nor an uncharacteristic addition to the local area.
7. Few details of the proposed external materials to the dormer have been provided although the Council has referred to the use of lead cladding and windows with grey aluminum frames. If that is the case, the use of a mid to dark grey colour would complement the lighter coloured render of the walls to the main house. To my mind, the modern style of the dormer and use of contrasting materials would add visual interest to the new rear façade and support the contemporary twist given to the design of the completed dwelling.
8. Lead cladding and aluminium framed windows would differ in colour and texture with the more traditional materials of the existing house and others nearby. However, that contrast would not jar with the appearance of the host dwelling or those close to the site. From the rear of neighbouring properties, the new rear dormer would be partially visible at some distance. The use of lead cladding and aluminium framed windows would not be obtrusive. They would merely signal a modern style to the dormer extension.
9. The size of the new first floor window above the main entrance would be a prominent feature of the new front façade. While longer than most first floor windows on properties in the vicinity of the site, it would be simple in design and sufficiently separated from other windows in the principal elevation to avoid any disruption to the pattern of fenestration. The type and size of the windows proposed in the rear elevation below the new dormer also support the overall design approach, which is to enlarge and update the host building to give it a more homogenous appearance and a contemporary feel.
10. Removal of the shallow pitched roof above existing 2-storey side projection, as proposed, would improve the appearance of the building by removing a discordant feature. The new roof would more closely follow the profile of the main roof and so it would introduce greater consistency to the roof form across the finished dwelling.
11. The Council raises no objection to the new door and window to the existing side extension, the glazed side panels to the main front door or to the new roof lights at the front and rear of the property. I, too, find these parts of the appeal scheme acceptable because they would be appropriate in design and

appearance and respect the intrinsic character of the host building and other properties nearby.

12. Overall, the proposal would change the scale and general appearance of the existing dwelling on all sides. However, it would achieve a high-quality design; respect the character and appearance of the host building; restore a sense of balance and consistency in built and roof forms with No 2; and be in keeping with the character and qualities of the local area. Therefore, I find that a conflict with some of the design guidelines within the SPD is insufficient reason in itself to withhold planning permission.
13. Reference is made to extensions and alterations to several other properties in the local area, which the appellants say the Council has approved. From the details and photographs provided, none of the cases cited are the same or very similar to the scale and detailed design of the proposal before me. As few direct parallels can be drawn between these examples and the proposal, I attach limited weight to them in support of the appeal. In any event, each development should be assessed on its own merits, which I have done.
14. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. As such, it would not conflict with Policy LP 1 of the Local Plan or the SPD. This policy and guidance broadly seek to ensure that development achieves a high design quality and respects, contributes to, and enhances the local environment and character.
15. Reference is also made in the grounds of appeal to a lawful development certificate (LDC) for a hip to gable extension and rear dormer at No 1. However, full details and plans of the LDC scheme have not been provided. Consequently, I am unable to carry out a full comparison with the proposal before me. As a result, I attach very little weight to the LDC decision.

Conditions

16. In addition to the standard time limit condition, it is necessary to impose a condition that requires the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for certainty. A condition is also required to ensure that the provisions of the submitted Fire Safety Statement are carried out for the health and safety of future occupiers.
17. To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development, a condition is imposed to require that the external materials match those of the existing building. I note that the application forms indicate that the proposed windows will include matching uPVC frames. Details of the materials to the dormer and its windows are not, however, defined in the evidence before me. Given the size of the dormer and its windows, it is important that the finished building should have a unified appearance and identity with respect to the materials used. The age of the building indicates that this can be most effectively achieved if details are submitted for written approval before work starts. It is necessary to impose a condition to this effect, in the interests of achieving a satisfactory appearance for the building. This condition is additional to those suggested by the Council.
18. The Council has also suggested a condition requiring that several measures are applied to protect trees on site. However, the application forms lodged with

the Council indicate that no trees or hedges would be affected by the proposal, which appeared to be the case from my site inspection. In those circumstances, I have not imposed this suggested condition.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR

Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Refs 460/01, 460/02 Revision A and 460/03.
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Safety Statement, dated 6 January 2022, and permanently retained as such thereafter.
- 4) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted (except the rear dormer extension), including those used in any works of making good, shall match those of the existing building.
- 5) No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the rear dormer extension and its windows hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.