

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 May 2024

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/24/3337159

7 Bedford Road, Twickenham TW2 5EW

- 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 Yang Zhang against the decision of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council.
 - The application Ref 23/1359/HOT, dated 17 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 15 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is for a ground floor and first floor rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework') was published in December 2023, but there are no material changes relevant to the substance of the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the appeal proposal upon the character and appearance of the area; and upon the living conditions of the occupants of 6 Bedford Road, with specific reference to outlook, daylight and sunlight.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site comprises a mid-terrace house in a location where dwellings have been extended to the rear in a number of ways, including at first floor and roof level, views of which are apparent within the rear garden scene.
5. The bulk of the single storey rear extension would fill the width of the plot and would be level with that found on the rear of 8 Bedford Road. On the rear of that element would be a further extension of a contemporary, almost flat roof design with a green roof and timber boarded elevations.
6. In totality the depth of the ground floor extensions would be greater than that of the main range of the host dwelling and when combined with the first floor extension would overall give the scheme a rather jumbled and confused appearance that would also lack subserviency in form. Further, the depth would be significantly greater than that as advocated by the Council's Supplementary Planning Document on House Extensions and External Alterations (SPD).

7. I acknowledge that neither the host dwelling, neighbouring built forms or the wider area are designated heritage assets and whilst the rear garden areas do exhibit an assortment and a diversity in physical and visual forms, nonetheless that is not a reason for 'anything goes' in terms of the overall quality of design and scale of proposals; and would be contrary to the Framework which puts great emphasis on the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings. Therefore, whilst the street scene may not be harmed by the proposal, overall the proposed extensions, by reason of their scale, siting and design would be overly dominant and visually incoherent in relation to the existing house.
8. In coming to this conclusion I have had regard to the personal statement submitted by the appellant and the other examples of extensions found along the street; and whilst noting that the Council raised no objection to the first floor extension proposed, in all other respects each case must be assessed on its own merits.
9. I note that the appellant was given conflicting advice by Officers of the Council, however, on this issue I can only conclude that the proposal would have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the SPD and also Policy D4 of the London Plan (2021) and Policy LP1 of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Plan adopted 2018 which require proposals to deliver good design, whilst demonstrating a thorough understanding of the site and how it relates to its existing context.

Living Conditions

10. I note the reference to the scheme failing the BRE 25° and 45° tests and whilst the proposed flat roof extension would extend beyond the rear elevation of no6 this would only be by 1.3m and by virtue of its single storey form I consider that any loss of outlook from the neighbouring property would not be significant. Furthermore, with regard to the first floor extension, the closest window on no6 would be affected, in terms of daylight and sunlight received, as well as outlook provided, nonetheless a second window also serves the same bedroom and therefore, on balance, I consider that the scheme would not give rise to demonstrable harm to the living conditions of the occupants of that neighbouring property.

Other Matters

11. I sympathise with the appellant in requiring additional living accommodation in order to provide for the needs of his family, however ultimately the occupation of dwellings is transitory and I am not convinced that the proposal before me is the only design solution available to achieve the aims. I also note the previous planning permission granted in 1995 on the host dwelling and whilst it is not for me to comment on the appropriateness of that, or otherwise, it is clear that a significant amount of time has passed since that planning permission was granted and I can only afford it limited weight in the planning balance.

Conclusion

12. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised by the appellant, I conclude that the Appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR