



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2024

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/24/3340360

15 Bell Lane, Twickenham, Richmond upon Thames TW1 3NU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ella Jarvis against the decision of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Council.
 - The application Ref. is 23/3410/HOT.
 - The development proposed is to refurbish and extend the ground floor into the rear garden space to create a larger kitchen and dining area, to partially extend the first floor and add a mansard roof extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Twickenham Riverside Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a narrow residential street off the commercial area of Church Street, wherein many mansard roof forms and front dormers are clearly apparent. The Twickenham Riverside and Queen's Road Conservation Area Study (CAS) highlights that there is a remarkable variation in design, materials and roofscape to which I concur.
4. The architecture within Bell Lane itself is a mixture of modern and vernacular, 15 Bell Lane being the end of a terraced row is dated in its appearance albeit with historic replacement fenestration. The south west elevation is visually exposed by virtue of the set-back principal elevation of Puddle Duck Down (17 & 19 Bell Lane) adjacent. Both 11 and 13 Bell Lane, adjoining, have pitched roofs with a contemporary infill dwelling at 9 Bell Lane having an additional storey, with built form rising up to those buildings fronting the aforementioned Church Street.
5. I find that the appeal dwelling with its flat roof currently appears incongruous within not only Bell Lane, but also from the Church Lane car park to the rear. All in all, I consider that the mansard roof extension with associated dormers, would harmonise with the local historic architecture and by themselves would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6. The Council raises no issue with regard to the single storey rear extension and I have been given no substantive reason to come to a different view on this. However, the first floor extension proposed in an area where such extensions are not clearly apparent, and notwithstanding the relatively eclectic design of rear elevations, would appear as an incongruous addition to the host dwelling due its flat roof and off-set nature, which incidentally is not helped by the tapered south eastern elevation.
7. I note that the first floor extension would be wider than half the width of the original house and that would certainly accentuate its dominance on the north eastern elevation. I therefore find that the first floor rear extension would represent an ungainly form of development that would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. I acknowledge the reasoning behind the rear first floor addition, in order to facilitate a family bathroom on that floor, however with respect, it appears that it is a case of form following function.
9. The extensive steps that the appellant has taken to engage with all residents are applauded, and that is clearly reflected within the representations submitted in support of the scheme, further it is not in dispute that the subject dwelling is in dire need of renovation. However, the proposed first floor rear extension would give rise to less than substantial harm to the designated Heritage Asset and the public benefits arising from the other elements of the scheme do not outweigh this harm.
10. Therefore I find the proposal contrary to Policies LP1 and LP3 of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Plan July 2018 which are concerned with local character and design quality, and designated Heritage Assets respectively; and together require all development to be of high architectural and urban design quality having regard to how a site relates to its existing context, including character and appearance whilst affording great weight to the conservation of the heritage asset.

Conclusion

11. Having regard to the above and all other matters raised by both the appellant and third parties, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR