



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 August 2024

by **D Cramond** BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/24/3345719

57 Rosecroft Gardens, Twickenham, TW2 7PT

- 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 James Berry against the decision of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Council.
 - The application Reference is 24/0385/HOT.
 - The development proposed is a new garden room in place of two existing outbuildings located in the rear garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a detached bungalow in a locality of similar detached and semi-detached homes. The site backs on to the bank of the Duke of Northumberland's River and a parallel footpath within Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) runs along the other side (east) of the waterway. The area is of established character and to front and rear the well-designed properties, gardens, and informal open space all come together to make an area of very pleasing appearance.
 4. The proposal is as described above and would be a rectangular flat roofed rendered building of about 8.5 (l) x 5.5 (w) x 2.85 (h) metres placed lengthways abutting the rear boundary of the site.
 5. The site lies within Rosecroft Gardens Whitton Conservation Area. There is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Local Plan (LP) Policy LP3 reflects S72(1) and adds more detail about further Council actions and controls intended to ensure the safeguarding of heritage assets.
 6. Whilst there are a range of garages and outbuildings in the locality, generally speaking these are low key, subordinate to a host dwelling and not immediately
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abutting the river bank. The character of the Conservation Area embodies a sense of spaciousness. This is in part on show but also a phenomenon which ought to be protected even if a proposal is not a streetscene issue. The aesthetic quality of the footpath looking towards the estate's direction is, in the main, one of informal greenery with some filtered glimpses of set-back buildings beyond.

7. In this context the proposed scheme, for an outbuilding of no great architectural merit and bright finish, would be markedly out of scale, symptomatic of overdevelopment and visually impinging on the scene from the east. It would be of significant height and take up most of the rear boundary length and reduce the scope for softening landscaping in the part of the garden close to sensitive surrounds. The scheme would lack subservience to the host property and simply be incongruous. I appreciate that two existing outbuildings would be removed but they are not directly comparable in massing, do not have specific planning permission, and do not form a blanket run of development along the rear boundary towards the MOL.
8. LP Policy LP1 is relevant. Amongst other matters this calls for good quality design with buildings which relate to context, protect local character and appearance, and are compatible with surrounding development patterns and spacing. LP Policy LP13 is also pertinent. Amongst other matters it seeks to ensure that development outside MOL would not visually impact upon character and openness of the MOL area. I conclude that the proposal would conflict with these policies. It would also run contrary to the aims of S72(1) of the Act and LP Policy LP3 because there would not be preservation or enhancement of character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Other matters

9. I understand why the Appellant would wish new facilities as proposed and I recognise that there would be a practical rationalisation of the existing arrangement. I can see that there has been some reduction in scale from an earlier submission. There was a willingness to perhaps reduce further and amend entrance detail but, to the Appellant's disappointment, the Council did not engage in this. I have to assess what is before me. I note that other examples were drawn to my attention but I am not persuaded these are directly comparable due to design, siting or size and, in any event, I must determine matters on the merits of this individual case. I do appreciate that no external or Council consultee objections were raised to the scheme and that matters such as ecology or flooding do not stand as issues.
10. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters carry limited weight and taken independently or collectively do not outweigh the concerns that I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
11. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered. Key objectives of the Framework are to protect and enhance the qualities of the built and open environment as well as to safeguard heritage assets; development plan policies which I cite mirror these. The Framework underlines that great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation. In this instance there are no public benefits or other benefits including to the Appellant which would outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Overall conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR