



# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 September 2024

by **D Cramond** BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 October 2024

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/24/3346525**

**34 Villiers Avenue, Twickenham, TW2 6BL**

- 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 Singaravelan Nalendra against the decision of London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Council.
  - The application Reference is 24/0131/HOT.
  - The development proposed is a first floor with pitched roof.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on a) the character and appearance of the locality and b) living conditions for neighbours.

## Reasons

### *Character and appearance*

3. The appeal property is a hipped roof white rendered bungalow at the end of a stretch of about 12 relatively similar homes. Beyond it lies a large chalet bungalow which turns the corner into Ellerman Avenue and has its rear garden abutting the side of the appeal plot. Across the road from the appeal property and elsewhere in the vicinity there is a mix of two and single storey homes which generally sit comfortably together in streetscene terms. The area is of established residential character and has a pleasing suburban appearance. The proposal is as described above and would effectively be changing a bungalow into a two-storey house.
  4. Being the end of a row of similar homes and with an adjoining length of garden and then a substantial corner property beyond I would assess that in principle well designed expansion and upper-level changes could be undertaken such that visual rhythm would not be interrupted. The appeal plot itself is of size could accommodate a suitable larger, well-positioned, building without seeming to be adverse overdevelopment.
  5. However, I do have an aesthetic concern with the scheme which is before me. Put simply the two-storey massing would be too close to the abutting bungalow and would look incongruous and present too harsh a change in height along this particular boundary. Almost without exception where two storey homes are alongside bungalows in this locality the two-storey mass is set away from the common boundary, usually by a garage, driveway, or single storey
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element. This gives a sense of spaciousness which is a characteristic of the streetscene. Unfortunately, this would be lost with the appeal proposal; its single storey garage would be on the side away from the bungalow. The harsh transition would be jarring on the eye; as is evident in my opinion from those few exceptions where two storey elements do sit immediately alongside bungalows. I do not know the full planning background of such incidences, or their pertinent planning policy context, but I am of the view that they should not be used as any sort of benchmark of good design.

6. Policy LP1 of the Local Plan (2018) and Policy LP28 of the Publication Version: Local Plan (Regulation 19) (LPR) are relevant. Amongst other matters they call for good quality design with buildings which relate to context, protect local character and appearance, are of suitable scale and appearance, and are compatible with surrounding development patterns and spacing. I conclude that the appeal scheme would run contrary to these policies. The Supplementary Planning Document: 'House Extensions and External Alterations' (SPD) has parallel objectives and, recognising that it cannot be expected to cover every eventuality in detail, I also conclude that the scheme would not accord with the *aims* of that document.

#### *Living conditions*

7. Most occupiers of bungalows locally would have a sense of space when in rear gardens or in rear parts of their homes. Built form is generally lower level, or, when larger, set at least a little away from key boundaries. Regrettably the planned arrangement here would intrude and markedly diminish the sense of space for occupiers alongside. This would be a substantial edifice almost on the boundary and to the southern side. The siting is too close for this mass of building and the effect would be visual intrusion and an undue sense of an overbearing built form impinging upon the reasonable expectations of some sense of spaciousness.
8. LP Policy LP8 and LPR Policy 46 aim to safeguard residential amenity; I conclude that the scheme before me would run contrary to this. It would also conflict with equivalent objectives in the SPD.

#### *Other matters*

9. I understand the wish to extend this property for additional family accommodation and I can see that there has been thought given to matters such as external materials, roof design and window form. As noted above I have considered the other buildings and permissions drawn to my attention but for reasons explained, in seeking good design, I would not see them as 'precedent' and, in any event, I must determine this case on its own merits. I appreciate the matter of the Certificate of Lawfulness concerning loft conversion, and the fall-back that offers, but to my mind that scheme would not provide sound reasoning for the larger proposal before me.
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 issues identified above.

11. The National Planning Policy Framework has been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

*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 and on living conditions for neighbours. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

*D Cramond*

INSPECTOR