

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 February 2025

by **Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/24/3353349**

**15 Bridge Way, Twickenham, Richmond upon Thames TW2 7JL**

- 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 Mr and Mrs Chandegra against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.
  - The application reference is 24/0511/HOT.
  - The development proposed is the erection of a first-floor side extension and single storey rear extension, rear dormer window and detached outbuilding.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural matters

2. From the evidence before me, the Richmond Publication (Regulation 19) Local Plan (PLP) is at an advanced stage in the adoption process. I have, therefore, attributed commensurate weight to the policies of the PLP.
3. On 12 December 2024, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework 2024) was published with an amendment issued on 7 February 2025. The Framework 2024, as amended, does not raise any new matters that are determinative to the outcome of this appeal.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area, and on trees.

### Reasons

#### *Character and appearance*

5. The appeal property is one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs that address Bridge Way, along which residential properties have similar characteristics with some variation in their design, size and general appearance. While there is no predominant dwelling style along Bridge Way that necessarily needs to be replicated or preserved to retain local character, it seems to me that notable or original design features of buildings should nevertheless be respected.
  6. In this case, the appeal dwelling shares a 2-storey front bay and a gable facing the road with its attached counterpart, which is 13 Bridge Way. Both Nos 13 and 15 also include a side-facing cat slide roof with half-timber detailing, which are symmetrically designed. Both the front gable and cat slide roof are prominent and distinctive features of the pair, and they positively contribute to local character.
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7. The appeal dwelling has been extended and altered and so the relationship between Nos 13 and 15 as a matching pair has been disrupted, which is evident from the road and the rear of the site. Nevertheless, the existing cat-slide roof and the half-timber detailing remain a common feature between these dwellings and appears to reflect their original design.
8. The proposal includes a first-floor side addition that would in effect draw the existing side extension further forward to align with the main 2-storey front wall. In doing so, additional scale and bulk would be introduced to one side of the dwelling that would further differentiate it from No 13 notwithstanding the set back from the front gable and the ground floor projection. Although the hipped roof would be retained, the main ridgeline would be extended at the same height over the new extension. By failing to provide a set down from the ridge, the proposal would conflict the advice within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), *House Extensions and External Alterations*. A longer main ridgeline parallel to the road would accentuate the scale and width of the extended front roof slope. The loss of the cat slide roof and half-timber detailing would also remove a distinctive feature of the host building and further impair the sense of balance and symmetry with No 13. The main outcome of all these changes would be significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, the pair and the local area.
9. The appellants place some reliance on the Council's decisions to approve extensions to other properties on Bridge Way and Redway Drive, with some background details provided. From the information provided, none of these examples are the same or very similar to the proposal in their design or relationship to the host building. Therefore, I am unable to draw direct parallels with the appeal scheme that has, in any event, been assessed on its own merits.
10. I also saw several properties along Bridge Way where one dwelling within a pair differs to that of its attached counterpart including those cases to which the appellant has referred and provided photographs. To my mind, these changes serve to illustrate that alterations to a building can have a significant effect on the character and appearance of the host property and its street scene. In most cases, the resultant disharmony between the appearance of the dwellings within an unbalanced pair due to their contrasting-built form at first floor level or the loss of the cat slide roof clearly exemplifies the harm that I have identified. Therefore, these cases do not lend support to the appellants' case.
11. At the rear, the new dormer would be a sizeable addition. While set back from the hipped roof end and the flank boundary, it would still cover a significant part of the host roof, as proposed to be extended. As a result, the proposal would visually dominate the new rear elevation and relate poorly to the proportions of the host building. Even if the roof coverage is less than 50%, as the appellant suggests, the visual impact of the new dormer would be proportionally greater. Moreover, the windows of the new dormer would neither line up with nor successfully relate to the pattern of fenestration below. While this part of the development would not be readily visible from the road, it would be readily evident from the rears of nearby dwellings. From these locations, the new dormer would give the completed building a discordant, top-heavy appearance. That other properties in the local area also include overly large dormers does not set a desirable precedent to follow.
12. On the first main issue, I conclude that the proposed side extension and rear dormer would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the local area. These elements of the appeal scheme therefore conflict with Policy LP 1 of the Council's Local Plan (LP), PLP Policy 28,

and the guidance within the Council's SPDs, *House Extensions and External Alterations* and the *Whitton and Heathfield Planning Guidance*. Together, these policies and guidance promote high design quality, aim to ensure that new development is compatible with local character and that residential extensions harmonise with the appearance of the original house.

### *Trees*

13. At the front of the site is a roadside tree, which could be protected during the construction phase if appropriate measures were agreed with the Council and put in place ahead of work starting on-site. These measures could be covered by an appropriate condition.
14. From what I saw, there are no significant trees within the site. Like the existing garden building to be removed and the hard standing that it stands on, the new outbuilding would stand close to some trees in the back garden of the No 13, which are not protected by a preservation order. The new addition could therefore fall within the root protection area of these trees, which make a modest and positive contribution in their garden setting. Again, appropriate measures could be put in place and secured by a condition to safeguard the health and longevity of these existing trees. These measures would ensure that no irreparable harm is caused by the new outbuilding or any related earthworks such as laying foundations or installing below ground services like drainage.
15. In those circumstances, I conclude on the second main issue that the proposed development would not cause unacceptable harm to trees. I therefore find no conflict with LP Policies LP 1 and LP 16 and PLP Policy 42 insofar as they seek to ensure that development protects, respects, contributes to and enhances trees. My finding on this issue does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the first main issue.

### *Other matters*

16. The Council appears to raise no objection to the ground floor rear extension although do consider that the development as a whole fails to harmonise with the scale and character of the original dwelling. For the reasons given, I share that view. I note that the proposed outbuilding has been designed in a way that it could come forward in any event through the exercise of permitted development rights.
17. Interested parties raise several additional concerns including the effect of proposal on the living conditions of others, drainage, and in relation to the potential future use of the outbuilding. These are all important matters, and I have considered all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the first main issue, these additional matters have not been critical to my decision.

### **Conclusion**

18. Overall, the development sought conflicts with the development plan, when read as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the policies of the Framework 2024, which indicate that the decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Gary Deane*

INSPECTOR