



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 April 2025 by M Long BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/D/24/3355979

36 Clifford Avenue, Sheen SW14 7BP

- 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 Mrs Uschi Knieper against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.
 - The application Ref is 24/2434/HOT.
 - The development proposed is two storey extensions to front and rear and enclose porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. During my site visit, I observed that works were being undertaken to the appeal dwelling, however it was unclear whether they related to the proposal before me. In any case, I have assessed the appeal scheme on its own merits based on the proposed drawings.
4. The Council's reason for refusal refers to policies of the 'Publication Local Plan'. By reference to the accompanying Officer's report, the 'Richmond Publication Local Plan' is an emerging document. I have not been provided with copies of these emerging policies. In any case, I am also not aware of whether the emerging document has been through examination and, if so, whether there are any unresolved objections or outstanding requirements for modifications. Therefore, I have assessed the proposal against the adopted policies of the development plan before me, these being included in the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan (2018) (LP).
5. It is clear from the Council's decision notice and officer report that its substantive concerns relate to the 'part two-storey front extension', and not the remainder of the proposal. I have defined the main issue on this basis.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed two-storey front extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

7. The appeal dwelling sits at one end of a terrace of four properties, each with a large two-storey front gable projection. These projections are arranged in balanced pairs with space on either side at the first-floor and roof levels, which distinguishes them as prominent design features. There are other terraces of similar design on this side of Clifford Avenue and there are some ground-floor level additions to the front of the terraces. However, the repeated pairings of front gable projections across them gives much consistency and order to the street and positively contributes to a locally distinctive character.
8. Even though it would be slightly set back, the first-floor element of the front extension would uncharacteristically project from the side of the gable projection at the first-floor and roof levels. Its proposed roof form, which would be part-hipped with a flat top, would also intersect awkwardly with the tall, pitched slopes of the host to result in a mismatch of roof forms at the front. As a result, the proposal would differentiate the host terrace from others in the row, detracting from the prominent design of the front gable feature and disrupting the consistent pattern of high level spacing that characterises these terraces. Its incongruous appearance would be visible from the public realm where it would be seen as detrimental to the locally distinctive character.
9. While the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames House Extensions and External Alterations: Supplementary Planning Document 2015 may not preclude first-floor front and side extensions, the proposed scheme would conflict with guiding principles within this document. In particular, that extensions must be carefully designed in order to avoid the visual confusion that can result when the style of the original house is ignored.
10. I observed a two-storey front extension to a terraced house with design similarities to the appeal property on the nearby Tangier Road. The full history of this scheme is not before me and so I cannot be certain of the circumstances in which it may have received planning permission. In any case, it is located around a corner, away and from the appeal site and is not seen within its immediate context. Houses on the other side of Clifford Avenue have different architecture to the appeal dwelling. Therefore, extensions to those particular dwellings also do not justify the proposal's discordance with the distinctive characteristics of the terraced dwellings that it sits amongst.
11. I conclude that the proposed two-storey front extension would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. In that regard, it would be contrary to Policy LP1 (Local Character and Design Quality) of the LP which seeks to ensure development respects, contributes to and enhances the local environment and character.
12. The Council has provided a copy of Policy LP28 which relates to 'Social and Community Infrastructure'. It has not been explained why the requirements of this policy are material to an assessment of character and appearance in respect of a house extension. In any case, whilst Policy LP28 has not been decisive in my conclusion, this does not diminish the conflict identified with Policy LP1.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Long

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR