

75- 81 George St, Richmond

Application refs – 19/3292/Ful & 19/2393/LBC

Addendum THVIA Report : Revised design, Night time views & additional viewpoints

January 2020

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report, together with the accompanying Verified Views document, should be read in conjunction with the THVIA report July 2019 submitted in August 2019 for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent together with the amended plans from Colman Architects submitted in January 2020 for the proposed development at 75 -81 George St Richmond.

2 Background

- 2.1 Following public consultation and the response from Heritage England (HE) and other relevant consultees, a number of issues were raised in relation to the impact of the proposed roof addition on the setting of the conservation areas and related listed buildings. Integral to this was the detailed design of the rear of the proposed roof extension. Of particular interest were the views from Richmond Green and a request for additional viewpoints and night time and winter views was made to assist in the assessment of the potential impacts on the Historic environment.

3 Revisions

- 3.1 The various issues raised have been set out in detail in the agent's covering letter with the amended submission of 17th January. Of specific relevance to this report are :
- Materials have been changed on the rear top floor extension from glazing to the more traditional slate finish – to reflect the finishes on nearby buildings, minimise the extent of glazing and provide a more typical solid to void ratio.
 - Change to the profile of the rear roof extension.
 - There is a significant reduction in glazing to just 5 window openings on the rear elevation facing the Green and a single window on the rear return elevation on the Golden Court Frontage. (Glazing is retained elsewhere on the main flank elevation.)
 - Glazing is omitted to the central core and this is clad solely in slate.
- 3.2 Together with the change in materials the revised submission proposes a more traditional roof profile by way of a 'mansard' type profile. As mentioned already this will have slate cladding and the windows will be aligned with those on the floors below.
- 3.3 The assessment below of the revised design in views : 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 & 8, the additional and the night time views : 7,9,10 & 11 will demonstrate the improved impact as a result of the above changes. The reduction in the extent of glazing at roof top level results in a more muted impact. The use of a more traditional roof form and cladding material results in a less conspicuous addition than previously proposed. Any light emission will be much reduced, very modest and of limited impact.

4 Views Assessment

4.1 View 2 - King Street from the north west

4.2 This view along King Street is one which currently demonstrates the greatest level of exposure of the stair core and roof plant structure and is unduly dominant and unsightly. By contrast the proposed roof extension presents a much improved view. The top floor is set back from the building's façade thus reducing the impact on the street. The design of the roof extension represents a major improvement over what currently exists here. The form, profile, height, massing, cladding and overall design is of a high quality and significantly improves the appearance of the building in this view and would be an enhancement within the Conservation Area. The revised plans result in the introduction of slate appearing marginally in this view where the new roof form is evident. Although a relatively small element from this viewpoint, nonetheless it helps in referencing the traditional roof form and material consistent with its surroundings.

4.3 In particular the reduction in height of the new stair core and it being set in from the building's edge results in reduced massing in this area giving greater prominence to the neighbouring chimney stack. Set in the context of the many listed buildings on King Street, and framed also by Old Palace Terrace, this also represents an improvement on their setting and that of the Conservation area. The proposed roof plant is not visible in this view and therefore has no impact here. Overall the impact in this view would be positive on both the setting of the conservation area and that of the listed buildings.

4.4 View 3 – View across Old Palace Terrace

4.5 In this view the well designed roof extension, replacing the existing unsightly roof plant structures, albeit a greater mass with a marginally reduced height, sits neatly above the roofs of the listed houses on Old Palace Terrace. The change in design is evident in this view where the traditional slate cladding replaces the more lightweight glazed treatment originally proposed. In this historic context the materials are more in keeping with the tiled roofs of the Old Palace Terrace houses and therefore do not stand out. Overall the more regular roof extension, both in terms of its extent and form, in this view replacing a bulky and somewhat irregular roof structure, provides a relatively neutral backdrop to this listed terrace. The mansard type profile is evident here and would appear as a more sympathetic extension to the building in this context and less obtrusive.

4.6 The new roof plant occupies approximately 2/3rds of the width of the roof. Above the central section of the listed terrace it is marginally visible and towards the north east there is greater visibility although it is angling away at this point and so quite recessive. Combined, these elements do not represent a significant intrusion in the roofscape. Given the distance between the listed terrace and the application site, together with the long view where the new structure becomes visible – and drops away due to the building's alignment, the roof extension and plant will appear as a marginal addition to the traditional and historic roofscape. Together, if anything, they are likely to be less, but certainly no

more obtrusive than the existing roof structures which, unlike the proposal, have no design merit.

4.7 The impact of the roof extension is partly mitigated as a result of the materials which are sympathetic and unobtrusive. Although in winter views this addition would be visible, but not particularly prominent as set out above, the roof extension will, during summer months and much of the year when trees are in foliage, be largely screened from view. As such the impact of this comparatively marginal incursion into the roofscape and at some distance, would not be harmful. Notwithstanding the greater mass and the marginally taller centrally located roof plant, the significantly improved aesthetic qualities, which as a result of the amendments are now more traditional and sympathetic than originally proposed, in comparison with the existing roof plant structures means that the impact would be neutral.

4.8 View 4 – from Richmond Green

4.9 In this view the new roof accommodation is a visible extension above the exposed 2 upper floors of the existing building which forms a backdrop to the Princes Head pub on the corner of Paved Court facing The Green. On the southwest side of the building the roof extension would replace the existing bulky and unsightly plant structures with a slightly reduced height. Whilst projecting further rearwards in the central section, in this area the more sympathetic roof extension, now, following amendment, wholly clad in slate and with a more traditional roof profile, would represent an improvement on the existing. The additional mass to the east, even in the winter views is viewed through relatively heavy tree cover, albeit not in foliage. Notwithstanding its greater mass nonetheless it would present a more uniform and better proportioned element with more appropriate traditional cladding. In summer views the roof extension will be very heavily screened by trees and will be barely perceptible.

4.10 The additional massing along this vista, seen in the context of a more orderly and better designed roof treatment to the existing building and, given heavy tree screening, replacing the existing plant structures, would result in an essentially neutral impact. Or at worst it would have a minor negative impact. The proposed roof plant adds marginally to the overall height but due to its siting set back centrally from the rear, although slightly visible it would not be prominent.

4.11 The design is a positive aspect and the detailing and materials are sympathetic to the context of the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. The overall improvement in the appearance of the building and the coherent design approach to this roof extension, notwithstanding the increased massing, results in a neutral or potentially minor negative impact on both the setting of the Conservation Area and the nearby listed buildings and any harm that would result would be less than substantial.

4.12 View 5 – View from The Green looking south west

4.13 In this view, which is a lateral view, the northwest corner of the roof extension, a comparatively small section, would be visible above the roof of the Princes Head on the corner of Golden Court and Paved Court. Set back beyond the rear of the pub and, in this

view, appearing significantly lower than the other corner building at 26 The Green (corner of Golden Court), the roof extension would be a marginal projection within this vista. Following the amended design and the introduction of slate cladding this small projection will now appear as a more traditional element and in this way will be less obtrusive.

4.14 The dominant element in this view would remain No 26 which together with the pub would still frame the view into Paved Court. This passageway, which is lined with listed buildings, mainly 2 storey buildings with ground floor retail, will therefore not be impacted and its scale and character would be largely unaffected. The pub's prominence in this view would not be reduced. The setting of the Conservation area and that of the listed Paved Court buildings and those fronting The Green would not be harmed. The impact would be limited.

4.15 View 7 – View from The Green – long view

4.16 This view is set further distant into the Green between views 3 & 4 above. Although the new roof extension is clearly visible between the trees, at some distance, this compares favourably to the existing situation where the roof plant is also visible. The main change in terms of impact is therefore related to the design and materials of the structure that appears in this view. As with the previous proposal the more regular form of the roof extension, now a mansard type profile, and quality of materials – a traditional slate cladding with windows aligned to those on floors below, the overall appearance of the structure represents an improvement over the existing bulky somewhat crude plant structure that currently exists. In the summer view the building as extended will be heavily screened by the extensive tree coverage. Any impact from the extension when trees are in leaf would be limited.

4.17 Whilst in winter the greater extent of the new roof addition compared to the existing will be more obvious. However it will still benefit from some screening through the leafless trees. The better proportions of the structure as it sits above the existing building together with the more traditional form and materials result in a relatively unobtrusive structure and the impact compared to the original proposal would be more muted. Its overall neater – almost symmetrical form, traditional design and materials will result in a neutral if not minor beneficial impact.

4.18 The newly provided night time winter view demonstrates the extent to which the extension would be visible. The substitution of slate cladding, with windows, for full glazing will have an obvious benefit in terms of reducing the potential of light emissions to a level consistent with the rest of the building. The building would therefore appear as a town centre building in the backdrop to this view. In summertime this issue would not arise and there would be very limited if any impact.

4.19 View 8 – View from King Street - close view

4.10 In this close view the new roof extension provides a much improved appearance compared to the existing situation. The massing of the new roof extension at this point is comparable to the existing, being markedly lower if slightly deeper, in terms of what is visible from this viewpoint. It is also slightly more recessed from the street parapet. The design details, the form and materials represent a significant improvement over what currently exists and an appropriate addition to this late 20th century building. The impact would be positive on the setting of the listed buildings opposite and this part of the Conservation Area. The introduction of slate cladding would contribute positively to this impact. The impact is very much as assessed in view 2 above and overall the proposal represents a clear visual improvement in this view.

4.21 New Views

4.22 View 9 – From Pembroke Villas west of Richmond Green

4.23 In this view the impact on the Conservation Area and listed buildings is very much the same as for View 7 above. The roof extension reads as a well-considered addition to this building due to its proportions and near symmetrical composition. The cladding material and roof profile are both sympathetic to the historic environment. The additional massing which is legible in this view is mitigated by its high quality design. In contrast to the awkward and unsightly bulky plant structures, noted as the “unattractive views of plant on the roof of Dickins and Jones” in the Council’s 2001 Conservation Area Study, the proposal represents a clear visual improvement counteracting the negative impact of the existing. The new plant area is well set back and with a very lightweight enclosure will appear as a marginal and recessive feature in this view.

4.24 In the night time view the limited number of window openings within the more solid roof structure limits the level of light emission and again the building as extended can be understood as a town centre building within the backdrop to the Green and its setting and the setting of the many listed buildings.

4.25 Outside wintertime, when the trees are bare, the extended building will be well screened and will not impinge on this view to any significant extent.

4.26 View 10 – From North part of Richmond Green

4.27 The daytime winter view reveals the extension but at a considerable distance across the Green. Even in winter there is an extensive screen of bare branches, effectively a veil, through which the extension can be seen. Compared to the existing view, even at this distance, which exposes the unsightly roof plant, the span of the roof extension in this relatively broad angle shows the extension as a low lying and well proportioned addition to the building. It has a neat and well designed appearance with sympathetic materials. Even at night where there would be some limited light emissions this represents a distinct improvement over the very poorly proportioned and inappropriately detailed structures

currently occupying the roof space. At this distance the proposed roof plant is barely perceptible.

4.28 In summer the screening from the trees would all but completely obscure the proposed new roof structure.

4.29 View 11 – From Portland Terrace, East of Richmond Green

4.30 Similar to View 10 above the mature trees which line this part of the Green provide a definite screening of the proposed roof extension. In summer time the clear likelihood is that the roof extension will not be visible.

4.31 The day time winter view shows the proposed extension is a better designed 'squaring off' of the existing roof structure with a more logical design rationale, better proportions, more sympathetic traditional design and materials in this Historic context. Compared to the acknowledged negative impact of the existing roof plant, the proposal would provide an improved visual appearance within the backdrop to the Conservation Area and the various listed buildings. Its impact, despite the additional massing, due to form and materials would be limited.

4.32 In the night time view the light emissions from the more traditional extension would not be unduly prominent. The vertical alignment of the windows will help minimise any potential adverse impact and as part of a backdrop town centre building the extension should sit well and in an unobtrusive manner within this setting. There would be no harm arising.

5 Conclusion

5.1 The comprehensive range of verified views analysed in the original report and this addendum report demonstrate that the impact of the proposed roof extension on Heritage Assets would not be harmful. The siting, form, design and materials, as revised, combine to provide an appropriate addition to the building. As it appears in the many views assessed the impact of any additional massing and height is significantly mitigated by well-considered design detailing and careful siting, even more so as a result of the amended roof profile and slate cladding. Overall a positive impact arises due to the quality of design and notwithstanding the additional massing the appearance of the building would be much improved. The setting of both Conservation Areas and the many listed buildings would be preserved.