



Planning Department
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Civic Centre
Twickenham
TW1 3BZ

BS/456

25 September 2024

Dear Miss McLaughlin,

**RE: 22 PARK DRIVE, EAST SHEEN, SW14 8RD
FORMAL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION REF. 24/2142/HOT –
LOFT CONVERSION AND ERECTION OF DORMER TO THE REAR AND PART
SINGLE, PART TWO STOREY SIDE AND REAR EXTENISONS AND BASEMENT**

This letter of objection is written on behalf of Mr and Mrs Shone ("Client") of 24 Park Drive, East Sheen, SW14 8RD, which is located to the south of 22 Park Drive, East Sheen, SW14 8RD ("the Application Site").

Our Client would like to record their **strong objection** to the submitted Householder Planning Application (Planning Ref. 24/21421/HOT) for a:

"Loft conversion erection of dormer to the rear and addition of gambrel roof dormer to the rear roof addition with roof lights to the front roof. Erection of part single part two storey rear and side extension. Addition of basement to the property together with replacement of windows and doors through out the house.."

Our Client considers the application to be poorly conceived and will have an unacceptably negative impact on the visual amenities of the locality and will detract from the amenity their household currently enjoys.

The application submitted follows a previous refusal requesting planning permission and dismissed appeal and it will be set out below, that the proposed revisions to the application, do not overcome the reasons for refusal upheld by the Planning Appeal Inspector.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Site Details

Park Drive principally comprises pairs of semi-detached dwellings, many of which on the east side of the highway are subtly different in appearance. Many of these dwellings benefit from rear roof extensions predominantly erected under permitted development and a number of dwellings have erected first floor or two storey side extensions.

While there are no specific planning constraints of relevance or heritage assets on Park Drive, the street scene is pleasant and tree lined, with the character considered to be a positive contributor to the townscape.

This accords with the Appeal Inspector's description, stating that *'the (appeal) site is situated within a pleasant, leafy residential street predominantly comprising semi-detached two storey houses, many of which have been altered and extended over time, including two storey side and rear extensions, as well as roof enlargements'*.

Planning History

As set out above, an application for the *'erection of dormer to the rear and addition of gambrel roof dormer to the rear roof addition. Roof lights to the front roof. Erection of part single part two storey rear and side extension. Addition of basement to the property together with replacement of windows and doors throughout the house. Installation of solar panels on the roof'* (ref. 23/2877/HOT) was refused for the following reason:

The proposed first floor rear extension and roof extensions would in combination represent a dominant, overbearing and unsympathetic form of overdevelopment which will negatively impact on the appearance, form and proportion of the host property and harm the character and appearance of the wider area. As such the proposal would be contrary to policy LP1 of the Local Plan (2018) and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local Plan Publication (Regulation 19)) Consultation version Local Plan (2023) policy 28. They also fail to accord with the House Extensions and External Alterations supplementary planning document.

An appeal against the Council's refusal was dismissed (ref. APP/L5810/D/24/3337007).

Relevant Planning Policy

National

- National Planning Policy Framework (2023) including Guidance

Regional

- The London Plan (March 2021)

Local

- Local Plan (2018)

The main planning considerations applying to the site and the associated Local Plan policies are (but not limited to):

LP1 – Local Character and Design Quality

LP8 – Amenity and Living Conditions

LP11 – Subterranean Developments and Basements

LP21 – Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

- Publication Version Local Plan (Regulation 19 version)

The Richmond Publication Version Local Plan (Regulation 19 version) and its supporting documents, including all the Regulation 18 representations received, was considered at Full Council on 27 April. Approval was given to consult on the Regulation 19 Plan and, further, to submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Examination in due course.

The Publication Version Local Plan, including its accompanying documents, have been published for consultation on 9 June 2023. Together with the evidence, the Plan is a material consideration for the purposes of decision-making on planning applications.

The weight to be given to each of the emerging policies and allocations will depend on an assessment against the criteria set out in paragraph 48 of the NPPF. As the Council considers the emerging Local Plan to be sound and legally compliant, it is understood that officers and Councillors should accord relevant policies and allocations weight in the determination of applications taking account of the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies.

- Relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance ("SPG") / Documents ("SPD")
 - Design Quality SPD
 - House Extensions and External Alterations SPD (2015)
 - East Sheen Village Planning Guidance

2. GROUNDS OF OBJECTION / ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

The key issues for consideration are (in no particular order):

- Impact upon Character and Design
- Neighbour Amenity
- Other Material Considerations

A. Character & Design

NPPF (2023) Paragraph 134 sets out that: *"development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies."*

The NPPF also advises that great importance is attached to the design of the built environment, and it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development.

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that: *"when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*

Paragraph 209 of the NPPF sets out that: *"the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*

London Plan Policy D3 (optimising site capacity through the design-led approach), seeks to enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance, and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy. It outlines that developments should: *'respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character.'* Furthermore, developments should *'be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan.'*

Policy D4 of the London Plan states that the: *"design of development proposals should be thoroughly scrutinised" and that 'design quality development should be retained through to completion.'*

Policy HC1 of the London Plan states that development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings.

Local Plan Policy LP1 of the Local Plan seeks to maintain and, where possible, enhance the high architectural and urban design quality which contributes to the character and heritage of the area. In order to achieve this, the following criteria must be assessed:

- Compatibility with local character
- Sustainable design and construction
- Layout, siting, and access
- Space between buildings
- Inclusive design, connectivity, permeability (as such gated developments will not be permitted)
- Natural surveillance and orientation
- Suitability and compatibility of uses

Publication Version: Local Plan Policy 44 states: *"a design-led approach will include an evaluation of the attributes of a site as well as the surrounding context, character and capacity for growth, as set out in Policy 25 Local character and design quality. Good design will be assessed as part of the planning process through use of the following tools."*

As set out above, the SPD: House Extensions and External Alterations provides a clear set of guidelines for house alterations and extensions. In terms of guiding principles, the SPD states that *'the external appearance of any extension must be carefully designed in order to avoid the visual confusion that can result when the style and materials of the original house are ignored.'*

The SPD states that *'the overall shape, size, and position of side and rear extensions should not dominate the existing house or its neighbours'*. It should *'harmonise with the original appearance'*, either by integrating with the house or being made to appear as an obvious addition.

On the refused planning application, the officer's report stated that *'The subject proposal involves a second-floor element through a substantial L-shaped roof addition which is, in combination with the width, considered to severely overdominate the existing dwelling, adding considerable bulk'*.

Three storey extensions are not a common feature within the locality. Furthermore, the design of the second floor extension would be completely out of character within the area. Overall, the three-storey element would fail to appear as subordinate and proportionate to the form and appearance of the original dwelling. The proposals represent an overdevelopment of the site'.

In relation to the main roof and the proposed gambrel roof, the officer's report stated that *'There is no scope for such roof form as it is considered to appear dominant and adds unacceptable bulk at roof level. The scheme would result in distorting the majority of the original roof profile, dominating its appearance and changing the architectural character and appearance of the host dwelling.'*

The assessment goes on to state that *'By reason of its overall bulk, design and form the resulting roof would represent an unsympathetic, dominant, visually obtrusive and incongruous form of development that would harm the character and appearance of the host property. The scheme does not respect the pattern of development in the locality and is not in keeping with those examples of such development along Park Drive.'*

The Appeal Inspector agreed with the Council stating that *'the proposed gambrel roof extension above would render it essentially three storey in appearance and when combined with the other extensions would give it an incoherent and jumbled appearance that would fail to meet the aim of the National Planning Policy Framework to create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings.'*

In conclusion the Inspector found *'the proposed gambrel roof extension would represent an incongruous and unsympathetic form of development that would negatively impact upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider area.'*

While the Council raised no objection to the side extension, it is noted in this respect that the appeal inspector stated *'The proposal from the street would appear quite bulky by virtue of the hipped roof form and lack of subordination.'*

The Inspector noted that *'such principles do not appear to have been adhered to on some other examples within Park Drive'* and noted that *'on balance, the Council has raised no objection to the scheme in this respect'*.

While the revised submission has sought to reduce the size and bulk of the proposed extensions, it is noted that the proposals remain considerably large in the context of the original dwelling and its roof (only a nominal reduction is shown).

The proposals retain a second floor projection over the proposed first floor rear extension. While this may not be as deep compared to the refused application, it would still result in a significant bulk of roof projecting beyond the rear elevation of the dwelling and in combination with the proposed first floor rear and two storey side extension, it would appear excessively dominant and intrusive.

While the ground, first and second floor of the three-storey extension would be staggered in depth, cumulatively it would still fail to appear as a subordinate and proportionate element in relation to the form and appearance of the original dwelling.

The proposed rear dormer would dominate the original and the proposed extended rear roof plane, extending almost the entire width and leaving little original roof space between the dormer and the eaves and ridgeline.

The proposed design has moved away from the refused gambrel design although this is still referenced in the description of development. Nevertheless, the bulk of the rear roof extension is still significant. The design remains incoherent and jumbled in appearance with the second floor projection straddling part of the crown roof of the proposed first floor rear extension. In addition, the proposed second floor window would project above the eaves of the dormer accentuating the prominence of this element. While perhaps a minor issue, the pitch of the roof over the second storey rear extension would not align with the proposed pitch of the roof over the first floor side extension. It is noted that this may be a drawing error as the rear elevation does not correspond to the proposed roof plan. The pitch of the roof over the second floor rear window is also set at a different angle. In combination, this adds to the overall incoherent appearance.

The proposals would not address the previous grounds for refusal and as a result, the unsympathetic design, siting and mass of the proposed roof and rear extensions would appear overly dominant, prominent and an incongruous form of development that would dominate the host property to the detriment of the design quality and character of the dwelling, semi detached pair of which it forms part and the visual amenities of the wider locality.

The submitted Planning, Design and Access Statement makes reference to a number of rear dormer windows in the area. However, many of these, as set out in the statement, were approved as being compliant with permitted development. It is set out in the statement that the proposed roof extension would be smaller than those erected under permitted development. However, as shown in the statement, the dormers of 26 and 28 Sunbury Avenue for example, are smaller and clearly set in from the edge of the roof and up from the eaves level.

The proposals are therefore contrary to the objectives of planning policy and adopted guidance, in particular Policy LP1 of the Local Plan (2018), policies of the emerging Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Document 'House Extensions and External Alterations'.

It is noted that the applicant has submitted examples of other roof extensions in the area. However, upon investigation many have been altered through the benefit of Permitted Development Rights, which are not particularly considerate of design merit. Those roof extensions that benefit from planning permission (examples in the 2010's) clearly comply with the guidance in the SPD.

Despite examples of roof extensions being evident in the vicinity, the proposed works at No. 22, being considerably larger in comparison, would erode the character and appearance of the area.

While it is appreciated that the Council found no harm to the proposed two storey side extension, despite being contrary to the guidance set out in the SPD, it is noted, as set out above, that the Inspector found this aspect to '*appear quite bulky by virtue of the hipped roof form and lack of subordination.*'

It is acknowledged that there are similar examples in the streetscape where such subservience has not been achieved. However, these are more the exception than the norm and were approved prior to the adoption of the Local Plan and SPD. In fact, the more recent extensions to the side of dwellings in Park Drive, have complied with guidance, where a more meaningful set back has been achieved and this is evident at Nos 4, 6, 12, 18 and 20. These were approved between 2007 and 2012 and when the SPD for House Extensions was in place. The thrust of guidance in respect of two storey side extensions has been in existence when SPD for house extensions was adopted in 2002 and has not changed in the updated SPD (2015).

B. Neighbour Amenity

Achieving a high or good standard of amenity is a core principle of planning, as set out in the NPPF.

London Plan Policy D6 sets out that: "*the design of development should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to new and surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, whilst avoiding overheating, minimising overshadowing and maximising the usability of outside amenity space.*"

Local Plan Policy LP 8 states that in considering proposals for development the Council will seek to protect adjoining properties from unreasonable loss of privacy, pollution, visual intrusion, noise, and disturbance.

Publication Version Policy 46 all development will be required to protect the amenity and living conditions for occupants of new, existing, adjoining and neighbouring properties and the visual amenity of the area as a whole.

SPD for Household Extensions sets out that: "*Extensions that create an unacceptable sense of enclosure or appear overbearing when seen from neighbouring gardens or rooms will not be permitted. This could be due to the height, footprint or proximity of the proposals to the surrounding area.*"

The SPD goes on to state that a new extension should not result in any substantial loss of privacy to adjoining dwellings and gardens to prevent overlooking.

As set out above, Council policy covers all development including extensions and alterations. The aim is to protect existing occupiers as far as possible from the unreasonable impacts of new development. Adverse impact on neighbouring properties, including on the most well used part of gardens, can include actual and perceived loss of light, overlooking, loss of privacy, alteration to micro-climate, pollution from noise or light and overpowering or obtrusive development. This could be from the new development itself and also from associated uses such as ancillary buildings, parking areas, access ways, gardens, and hard and soft landscaping. Whilst there may be some impact from any new development, the test is one of reasonableness.

While there has been a small set back of the projection of the rear extension at second floor level and notwithstanding the set in from the shared boundary with No. 24 Park Drive, the proposed bulk, mass, height and siting of the rear extension and wider roof extensions would result in an overbearing, dominant and visually intrusive form of development when viewed from No. 24 Park Drive.

In addition, my Client is concerned about other aspects of the proposal such as the proposed windows in the side elevation of the ground and first floor rear extension and overlooking to their property including into the rooflight of their ground floor extension. The proposed patio would also result in unreasonable overlooking and the proposed 1.5m privacy screen would not adequately mitigate overlooking from standing positions in the vicinity.

In combination, the cumulative impact would detract from the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of neighbouring properties, including that of my Client. The scale of the development would result in an unnerving sense of enclosure and overwhelm neighbouring properties, particularly when seen from adjacent gardens, detracting from the enjoyment of their amenity space.

As a result, the proposal would clearly be contrary to adopted policy (LP8) and guidance set out above.

C. Other Matters

The proposals have been reviewed by an architect and the following comments have been noted:

Roof design - the roof for the proposed side extension has not been set back to account for the set back of the first floor walls below - this would give way to a design feature wholly out of keeping with the style of property as it would end up with a very deep overhanging roof at first floor eaves level. The bulk of the roof would also be out of keeping with any neighbouring properties.

The first floor and roof plans are a little unclear as they do not show what is happening with the roofs below in particular what is happening to the parapet of the existing garage and how this is to be incorporated into the extension as a whole, both at the front and along the boundary with No. 20.

Rear roof - There is no cohesion in the design of the proposed rear roof and from a build out point of view, this does not look feasible. From a planning/design point of view - there are four different roof angles incorporated into the design, only one of which bears any relationship to the existing roof pitch. The design is not consistent from rear elevation to side elevation and does not demonstrate how the eaves, gutters and fall of the flat roof section would actually function.

Concern is raised that the designs show a lack of understanding or sufficient detail to demonstrate how it would be constructed, and further concern notes that a number of changes may be required and not necessarily communicated with my client and Council. For example, the pitch window to the rear has a pointless roof detail that the builders would need to increase the height and depth of to actually construct and to provide sufficient depth to meet compliance with building regulations. Grave doubt is expressed that the design cannot be realised and it ends up being far more bulky and higher than currently proposed.

In summary -

- 1) the tiny set back from the front of 150mm is insufficient to differentiate the extension from the original building line.
- 2) the roof line above has not been set back to correspond with the line of the extension and would lead to a very deep overhang of the roof eaves that would be very out of keeping with the local vernacular style.
- 3) multiple pitches to the rear dormers which are out of keeping with the existing character and show no understanding of how the structure is to be built
- 4) lack of detail of ground floor roof design to garage and extension adjoining No. 20.

3. CONCLUSIONS

For the reasons set out above, we respectfully request that the Council **refuse** the application.

We consider the proposal by reason of its inappropriate design, height, siting and scale would represent a dominant, bulky and incongruous form of development that would detract from the character, appearance and visual amenities of the locality. The scheme is thereby considered to be harmful to local character and is contrary to the requirements of Local Plan Policy LP1 and adopted Guidance.

The proposal by reason of its inappropriate design, height, siting and scale would represent a dominant and intrusive form of development that would be overbearing on neighbouring properties detracting from the enjoyment of them. The scheme thereby considered to be harmful to local character and is contrary to the requirements of Local Plan Policy LP8.

It is considered that the adverse impacts of allowing this planning application would significantly outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in NPPF (2023) and Development Plan, when taken as a whole.

I look forward to receiving an acknowledgement of this letter shortly and please contact me should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Bryan Staff B Tech TRPI
Director

M: 07807 914 155
E: bryan.staff@jl-a.co.uk