

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by Helen Hockenhull BA(Hons) B.PI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/D/16/3155686
56 Surrey Grove, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3PL

- 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 Philip Dainton against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
 - The application Ref C2016/74291/HHA, dated 29 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear extension and two storey side extension and single storey front extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear extension and two storey side extension and single storey front extension at 56 Surrey Grove, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3PL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref C2016/74291/HHA, dated 29 April 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing and proposed front and rear elevations; Existing and proposed side elevations; Existing and proposed ground floor plan; Existing roof plan; and Existing and proposed first floor plan and proposed roof plan.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property forms a semi-detached hipped roof dwelling with a single storey attached garage to the side, located in a residential area of similar type dwellings. The neighbouring property at No. 58 Surrey Grove also has a similar single storey side garage. The side garage extensions have the effect of visually linking the properties at ground floor.
-

4. It is proposed to demolish the side garage and construct a single storey rear extension, a two storey side extension and a single storey front extension. The extensions would replicate the design, proportions and roof height of the host property. I note no concerns have been raised by the Council with regard to the rear extension.
5. The Council's Design of Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2006 (SPD) recommends that two storey side extensions should be subordinate to an existing house and should be set back from the front elevation, with a lower ridgeline and should be proportionately no wider than half the width of the existing house. In the appeal case, the proposed two storey side extension would be no more than half the width of the existing house but would be flush with the front elevation and would have the same ridge height as the roof of the existing house. It would therefore not comply with the Council's guidance.
6. The objective of the SPD is to retain gaps between dwellings where they are characteristic of the street scene as closing the gaps could result in visual crowding. However to my mind, a side extension in line with the SPD would still fill the space between the neighbouring dwellings, albeit the extension would be slightly set back and lower and therefore distinguishable as an addition to a property.
7. I observed on my site visit that the No. 56 is set slightly further back than its neighbour at No. 58 Surrey Grove creating a slight offset between the extension and the flank wall of the neighbouring property. In addition as the proposal would retain the hipped roof of the dwelling, the potential for a terracing effect should the neighbouring property be extended in a similar fashion would be minimised.
8. I acknowledge that the proposed extension would unbalance the appearance of the semi-detached pair; however a two storey side extension in line with the Council's guidance would also do this. I noted on my site visit that there were other semi-detached pairs in Surrey Grove where only one half of the semi had been extended. I consider that this would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the appeal property and its neighbour.
9. The appellant has brought my attention to a significant number of other properties in Surrey Grove that have had a two storey side extension. I noted on my visit that some of these extensions were constructed in line with the Council's guidance however many were not. Whilst I accept that some of these may have been granted planning permission before the introduction of the current SPD in 2006, what is significant is the number of properties that have been extended in this manner. The appellant suggests that over 25 houses out of 96 have a side extension of which 18 do not comply with the Council's guidance.
10. The number of such extensions has in my view altered the street scene of the area. I therefore consider that the appeal proposal would not appear out of character in the locality. The development would therefore comply with Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Sutton Site Development Policies DPD 2012 which aim to achieve high quality design and maintain and enhance local character.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard condition which limits the lifespan of the planning permission, I have specified the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of the proper planning of the area. A condition relating to materials is necessary to ensure the appearance of the extension would match the existing dwelling maintaining the character of the area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude the appeal should succeed.

Helen Hockenhull

INSPECTOR