

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

by Debbie Moore BSc (HONS) MCD MRTPI PGDip

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

Decision date: 13th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/W/16/3158211

The Bungalow, Wandle Bank, Beddington, Sutton CR0 4SN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr T Parratt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
 - The application Ref D2016/73466/OUT, dated 11 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 25 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "Construction of four detached houses together with access and car parking following demolition of the existing bungalow and associated outbuildings".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The outline planning application sought approval for all matters except landscaping. I have, therefore, taken the following plans into account in my consideration of the appeal: site location plan; block plan; floor plans; elevations.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - (i) the character and appearance of the area, in particular the Beddington Village Conservation Area;
 - (ii) highway safety, with regard to access for emergency and service vehicles and;
 - (iii) the living conditions of adjoining occupiers, with regard to privacy and outlook.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The site is situated towards the southern end of the Conservation Area and is located to the rear of a group of late 19th Century terraced houses, which face towards the River Wandle. The site is bounded to the north by a channel of the river, and to the east and west by the rear gardens of adjoining houses.
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5. The Conservation Area is characterised by rows of late Victorian and early Edwardian terraced and semi-detached houses which display architectural features typical of the era. This includes bay windows, canopies, brick and render detailing and decorative barge boards. There are more modern developments in the vicinity, however, the significance of this part of Conservation Area is attributed to the 19th Century housing development.
6. The development would involve the demolition of an existing bungalow on the site and its replacement with four detached houses. The house designs would incorporate bay windows with canopies, and the window detailing would be similar to the houses along Wandle Bank. However, the proposed layout would not reflect the established character of the area. The houses would be comparatively wide and would be arranged in a modern estate style layout comprising detached houses with driveways. The design detailing would be a positive feature but it would not overcome the fundamental inconsistency of the development layout with the surrounding 19th Century housing. Although the development would not be prominently located, the houses would be visible in views from a number of properties that adjoin the site. The development would not complement the existing development and would appear incongruous.
7. Consequently, the development would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It would be contrary to Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Site Development Policies document¹, Policy BP12 of the Core Planning Strategy² and the Supplementary Planning Document on Urban Design³ which seek to secure high quality development that respects and improves local character.

Highway Safety

8. The site access would be adjacent to No 1 Wandle Bank and the plans show that the access would be widened to a width of 4.97 metres. The access road would continue into the site bending to the east where the width would increase to 6.15m. No turning area would be provided which means that there would not be adequate space for emergency and service vehicles to enter, turn and exit the site in forward gear.
9. Whilst it may be possible to reverse an emergency or service vehicle out of the site, this would lead to conflict with other users especially as there would be no segregated pedestrian area within the site. I appreciate that the development would be relatively small and there would not be large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists using the access road. Nevertheless, the manoeuvre would be dangerous especially as vehicles would be reversing around a corner within the site. Moreover, the visibility splays at the junction of Wandle Bank are restricted due to the existing development either side of the access. It is unlikely that visibility could be substantially improved as the land does not appear to be within the control of the appellant. Consequently, vehicles reversing from the access road would present a hazard to other road users.

¹ London Borough of Sutton Local Development Framework: Site Development Policies Development Plan Document (adopted March 2012)

² London Borough of Sutton Local Development Framework: Core Planning Strategy (adopted December 2009)

³ London Borough of Sutton Local Development Framework: Supplementary Planning Document – Creating Locally Distinct Places (adopted January 2008)

10. I have considered the appellant's argument that appliances would be able to use the car parking bays that would serve each dwelling as a turning area. However, this would only be effective if the spaces were not in use for parking, and even then it has not been demonstrated that large vehicles could turn safely.
11. I conclude on this issue, that it has not been demonstrated that safe and suitable access to the site can be provided for all people, and therefore the development would be contrary to policy DM20 of the Site Development Policies document.

Living Conditions

12. The proposed houses would be sited approximately 20 metres from the rear elevations of Nos 1-8 Wandle Bank. Each house would have two windows at first floor level, serving the main bedroom. The Council's primary concern is that the windows would enable views towards the rear gardens of the neighbouring houses. However, there is unlikely to be a material loss of privacy as the gardens are not completely private at present.
13. I have also considered the loss of outlook to properties on Wandle Bank and Beddington Lane and I find that the length of the gardens would be sufficient to mitigate any adverse effect.
14. Consequently, I conclude on this issue that the development would not have an adverse effect on the living conditions of adjoining occupiers due to loss of privacy and outlook. Therefore, it would be in accordance with Policy DM2 of the Site Development Policies document, which seeks to preserve the amenities of future occupiers or those currently occupying adjoining or nearby properties.

Conclusion

15. I conclude that the development would lead to harm, as described above. Whilst, the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset would be relatively localised, and therefore less than substantial in terms of the national policy, I give great weight to the preservation of the Conservation Area. There are limited clear public benefits that would outweigh the harm in this instance.
16. For the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Debbie Moore

Inspector