

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2017

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/D/17/3166987

40 Coleridge Avenue, Sutton SM1 3RQ

- 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 Peter Gillen against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
 - The application Ref C2016/75440/HHA was refused by notice dated 16 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey side/front extension, minor roof alterations and hard landscaping to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a mainly two-storey detached house that stands at one end of a row of four similar properties in a staggered layout on a road that spurs from the main highway in a predominantly residential area. Despite some external changes to the dwellings within this row, to which the appellant has referred and provided details, the broadly consistent built form, general appearance and regimented layout give this particular line of houses a broad uniformity as they address the road, which is locally distinctive. As part of that small group, No 40 adds to the character and appearance of the local area.
 4. The proposal is primarily to enlarge No 40 with a ground floor extension to the front and side of the main house, with a part flat, part hipped roof and several upward projecting domed roof lights. The new addition would be of matching external materials and the pattern of openings would be keeping with the style and appearance of the main house.
 5. The new extension would stand to one side of the front elevation, projecting noticeably forward of the main front wall to infill part of the gap between the main house and the side boundary of the site. While the appeal scheme would be set back from the road, when viewed from Coleridge Avenue it would still be a new and prominent feature of the host building and the local street scene.
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6. As the appellant points out, the new addition would be much smaller than the detached house under construction next to the site and within the rear garden of 83 Shirley Avenue. This house stands at an oblique angle to No 40 and unlike the adjacent row of houses it does not directly face the road. As such, it stands clearly apart from the established linear pattern of the neighbouring development of which No 40 forms part.
7. Even with a sizeable house next to it, the proposal would appear to be a sizeable addition. It would noticeably widen the built form of No 40, enlarge its footprint and significantly add to its scale and mass. The visual effect of the new development in the local street scene would be accentuated by its forward projection of the main house and its considerable width, extending well beyond the flank wall of the existing building. When viewed from the road, the additional built form at one side of the front façade would unbalance the principal elevation, to the detriment of the intrinsic character of the house. As the only example of such development in the same row as No 40, the proposal would be obtrusive in the street scene. It would also unduly disrupt the rhythmic pattern of the group to which it belongs, to the detriment of the area's character and appearance.
8. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 4 *Design of Residential Extensions* (SPD) states that extensions that project in front of the building line will not generally be acceptable as they can upset the architectural integrity of the original house and have an intrusive effect on the street scene. Where a large detached dwelling stands within a substantial plot, sitting well back from the road, the SPD notes that exceptions can be made if the addition does not over dominate the front elevation or create visual imbalance. On that basis, the proposal would not qualify as an exception. Rather, it would exemplify some of the concerns to which the SPD refers.
9. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the host building and the local area. Accordingly, it is contrary to Core Policy PMP2 of the Council's Core Planning Strategy and Policy DM1 of its Site Development Policies. These policies aim to ensure that extensions are of a scale and massing that is appropriate to the site, and for all development to maintain and enhance the character of the surrounding area. For the reasons given, it would also be at odds with the guidance within the Council's SPD.
10. The proposal would provide additional living accommodation that would improve the living conditions of the appellant and his family. However, this consideration does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

11. Overall, for the reasons given above, and taking into account the absence of objections from others, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR