
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2017

by Graham Wyatt BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22nd August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/W/17/3174177

39 Bardney Road, Morden SM4 5JL

- 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 Terry and Miss Sally Walker against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 16/P3384, dated 30 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 3 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a house with ancillary facilities.
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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 area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is an end of terrace dwelling which is sited on the junction of Bardney Road and Beeleigh Road. The site benefits from a garden area to the side of the dwelling which is currently used for parking of vehicles. It is proposed to extend the terrace into the side garden with the development of a 2 storey dwelling to match the host property.
4. The site lies within an established residential area. The majority of dwellings form part of terraces arranged in a linear manner facing the road. The area has a pleasing sense of rhythm and a degree of uniformity and spaciousness which is reinforced by the similar layout and appearance of dwellings. The side garden area of the site contributes to the open character of the area, which is reflected in similar side and front garden spaces on corner plots throughout the estate.
5. The proposed dwelling would almost fill the entire width of the plot with a gap of some 1 metre remaining to the boundary. It would reduce the space at the site, eroding the openness at this part of Bardney Road. The proposal would interrupt the uniformity of the street scene and would be out of keeping with the prevailing spacious character of the area.
6. On this basis, I conclude that the development would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies DMD1, DMD2 and DMD3 of the Merton

Site Policies Plan and Policies Maps (2014) and Policy CS14 of the Merton Core Strategy (2011) which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development proposals relate positively to existing street patterns and respect space between buildings where it contributes to the character of the area.

Other Matters

7. The appellant has made reference to other properties in the area that are considered to demonstrate that the Council has now shifted its view on corner plot developments. However, these are very much in the minority and, in any case, the existence of development elsewhere does not represent an irresistible precedent to find in favour of a proposal that would cause harm or lead me to alter my findings on this issue. Moreover, the examples provided are not so similar as to be a direct comparison to the development before me. In any case, I have considered the appeal on its own merits.
8. I acknowledge that since a previous appeal decision in 2006, which dismissed a similar development at the site, planning policy has changed. However, there is still a requirement through both national and local plan policies to ensure that planning always seeks to secure developments that respond to local character and add to the overall quality of the area.
9. I appreciate that the design of the proposed dwelling itself seeks to reflect the local vernacular and that suitable materials could be employed. Although there is support for the principle of housing in this location neither this nor any other material consideration that has been advanced outweighs the identified harm and conflict with policy.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having regard to the development plan when read as a whole, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wyatt

INSPECTOR