The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 May 2019

by M Seaton DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/D/19/3223967
19 Northway, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 8DH

- 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 Steve Waterman against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
- The application Ref DM2018/02036, dated 12 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 11 January 2019.
- The development proposed is a first-floor side extension creating a loft space involving the formation of a dormer to the rear.

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 dwelling and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling with attached single-storey garage and is located on the northern side of Northway with allotments set on land beyond to the north. The front elevation of the appeal property is set at an obtuse angle to the neighbouring property (No. 17) and terrace due to the continuation of the bend in the road.

4. The Council has drawn my attention to Policies 28 and 30 of the London Borough of Sutton Local Plan 2016-2031 (the Local Plan). These policies address character and design and heritage, with the appeal site identified as being located within the locally designated Bute Road Estate Area of Special Local Character. The reason for refusal also refers to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 4: Design of Residential Extensions 2006 (SPD4), which addresses amongst other things design guidance for side and dormer extensions.

5. The proposed extension would neither incorporate a set-back from the front elevation of the existing dwelling nor from the common boundary with the neighbouring property. In contrast with the current absence of development at first floor level, the existing proposal would significantly close the gap at first floor level within the street scene, essentially resulting in the extension of the terracing effect between the neighbouring terraces and creating a visually crowded appearance to this part of the street scene. This would appear at odds

with the prevailing character of the Bute Road Estate Area which gives the impression of a degree of spaciousness created by generously wide front gardens, and where existing terraces and dwellings are observed as being separated by retained gaps which provide visual relief from built development.

6. Whilst I accept that the ridge of the proposal would be set down from that of the existing dwelling, the incorporation of a gable-end to the extension would further exacerbate the visual impact of the proposed development due to its bulk and width, and would also lead to an awkward juxtaposition with the neighbouring hipped roof side extension at No. 17 Northway. Consequently, the detailed design and form of the proposed extension would not be subservient to the existing dwelling and would appear as an overly dominant addition within the streetscene.

7. The appellant has indicated that the design of the proposed first floor side extension has been influenced by the footprint and form of the existing ground floor garage, which clearly responds to the position of the boundary with the neighbouring property, No. 17 Northway. However, whilst I understand the rationale from which the design of the proposed extension has been based, and also the technical complexities related to building a reduced width of extension, the proposal is clearly at odds with the design guidance as set out within SPD4.

8. I also note the appellant's concession that a set-back of 0.5 metres could be accommodated within a revised design. However, no alternative plan demonstrating such a set-back has been adduced, and in any event SPD4 clearly sets out a requirement for extensions at first floor level over an existing ground floor extension or garage to be set back by 1.5 metres rather than 0.5 metres.

9. Turning to the rear dormer extension, it would not be readily visible from the street scene although would clearly be so from neighbouring properties and the allotments to the rear. In the context of its location on the building and its detailed design, I would agree with the Council's assessment that it would represent a visually dominant feature which would appear as a bulky addition to the property. This again would not accord with the guidance set out within SPD4 where dormer windows would be expected to be of a scale and proportion which would be subservient to the main roof, and should avoid large, flat-roofed box-like dormers.

10. For the above reasons the proposed development would result in an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host property, and consequently the area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies 28 and 30 of the Local Plan, and SPD4. These policies and guidance seek to ensure that extensions are designed to the highest standard, respect local character and context and heritage assets, including those locally designated.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has referred to the two-storey side extension at No. 17 Northway which is cited as having been allowed at appeal in 2003, and the frustration that this extension should not be used as a precedent for future developments. However, whilst I sympathise with the appellant's position, the current proposal must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan and material considerations in place at the time of the determination of the planning

application or appeal, which in this instance and for the reasons set out, indicate that planning permission should be refused.

12. I have also had careful regard to the personal circumstances advanced by the appellant as justification for the need for the additional accommodation. Whilst this must carry some limited weight in support of the proposed development, this would be insufficient to outweigh the harm which I have found in respect of the main issue.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR