



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2019

by Mark Caine BSc (Hons) MTPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/D/18/3219224

3 Aberconway Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5LN

- 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 Mushtaq Ahmed Spaul against the decision of London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 18/P3379, dated 31 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 29 October 2018.
 - The development proposed is described as 'a kitchen and dining room'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The development applied for has been carried out. However, the submitted plans show the design of the proposed side extension to differ from what is currently on site. On my site visit I saw that a predominantly glazed porch with uPVC framed windows and door was in situ. For the avoidance of doubt, my determination of the appeal is based on the drawings submitted to and determined by the Council.
3. The Council's decision notice lists two reasons for refusal. However, reason 2 refers to the approach to decision taking as set out in the former National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which normally appears as an informative. This has had no bearing on the appeal as I have determined it on the planning merits of the proposal that is before me.
4. Subsequent to the date of the Council's decision, the Government published its revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) on 19 February 2019. However, in relation to the main issues in this appeal, the revisions have not changed national planning policy.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed single-storey side extension on the street scene.

Reasons

6. The appeal relates to a hipped roof end terrace property that is situated on a prominent chamfered corner location next to the junction of Bardney Road and Aberconway Road.

7. The character of the immediate area is predominantly residential, comprising short terrace rows with hipped roofs. There is a general uniformity in the design and layout of these properties, which provide simple, and balanced buildings. Gaps in between and to the end of these terraces in combination with the low boundary treatment, mature trees and nearby areas of open space provide a pleasant and relatively spacious green suburban character.
8. I appreciate that the extension sits within a spacious plot and is set back from the front face of the original dwelling. The submitted plans also show it to be constructed in materials that match those found on the main house and to be of a relatively low profile due to its flat roof.
9. Nonetheless, it is of an excessive width when compared to that of the appeal dwelling's frontage. It is also sited in close proximity to the shared boundary with 5 Aberconway Road. As a result, it does not appear as a subordinate addition and significantly erodes the gap in between these two neighbouring properties.
10. In combination with its uncharacteristic flat roof design and small window proportions the bulky rectangular box shaped appearance not only has an unsympathetic and unbalanced relationship with the appeal building but substantially diminishes the sense of spaciousness that the estate possesses.
11. Although views of the first floors and roof-scape of the buildings on Bardney Road would be maintained I noted on my site visit that the extension is clearly visible above the adjacent boundary fence. It would also be readily apparent above any 2 metre high means of enclosure. The harm that I have identified is therefore clearly discernible from a number of neighbouring properties and directions along Aberconway Road.
12. This is contrary to advice contained in the St Helier Estate Design Guide (Design Guide). Amongst other things, this seeks to avoid the use of flat roofs and ensure that side extensions are sympathetically designed to be subordinate to the main house, generally being single-storey with a pitched roof. Whilst I recognise that this guidance cannot predict every eventuality and should not necessarily be applied prescriptively I have no reason to conclude that it is not a material consideration in the context of this appeal.
13. I therefore find that the proposed single-storey side extension would have a significantly harmful effect on the street scene. As such it conflicts with Policy DMD3 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan 2014, Policy CS14 of the London Borough of Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy 2011, and advice within the Design Guide. These encourage high quality design that reinforces and respects the local character of the area and contributes to a sense of place and identity. Extensions and alterations are also required to respect and compliment the design and detailing of the original building and the context, and layout of the surroundings.

Other matters

14. In reaching my findings I am aware that the appeal dwelling is not listed, and that it is not located in a conservation area. It has also been put to me that there would be no significant loss of light or visual intrusion to the occupiers of

neighbouring properties. However, these factors do not overcome or outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Mark Caine

INSPECTOR