



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 January 2020

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/W/19/3239968

97 Revesby Road, Carshalton SM5 1EZ

- 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 Silvio Sorce against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
 - The application Ref DM2019/00658, dated 11 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 4 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is a new build 1 bedroom dwelling on land adjacent to 97 Revesby Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 1EZ.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on: (i) the character and appearance of the St Helier Estate Area of Special Local Character (ASLC); and (ii) the living conditions of future occupants, with regards to internal living space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site comprises of land that currently forms part of the two-storey end terrace dwelling at 97 Revesby Road. The site is located on the corner of Revesby Road and Peterborough Road within an area characterised by residential properties of a similar scale, style and appearance. There is a limited palette of house types within the ASLC which the site forms part of. The ASLC was designated in 2003 with its layout based on Parker and Unwin "cottage" architectural style, in the Ebenezer Howard "Garden City" tradition. This has led to a strong urban grain in the area surrounding the site.
4. Properties were designed to fit into tight corners sites and acute angle road intersections. As such, properties generally have a rigid building line. The spacious quality of the area is due to extensive areas of adjacent public open spaces and low-rise terraces that are not intrusive within the townscape. When the estate was originally built, it was the intention to provide as large an area as possible for recreation and to enhance the environmental quality of the area. The smaller open spaces within the estate give the ASLC its special character. These spaces range from small incidental open spaces to 'village greens'. As the site is a corner plot, it is part of the prevailing pattern of development and

helps maintain the uniformity between dwellings. Maintaining the established building line helps protect the open spaces.

5. Sutton's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 14 Creating Locally Distinctive Places (SPD14) seeks to build on local character to protect the positive features of Sutton's suburban townscape. In areas with an existing distinctive character, such as an ASLC, new development will need to reflect the reasons for this character, such as building style, scale and proportions, building rhythm, materials, detailing or decoration.
6. The formation of a dwelling at the end of the terrace and the use of a hipped roof would respond to the character and appearance of the area. The flank elevation of No 97 is roughly level with the front building line of properties on Peterborough Road. The proposal would project beyond the building line of properties on Peterborough Road and erode the space associated with the corner plot. Furthermore, the side elevation of the proposed dwelling, which would step inwards twice, would not reflect the typical rectangular footprint associated with nearby properties. While, the proposed layout would be a specific response to the site and the use of the roof space would be an efficient use of space not out of sync with the character and appearance of the area, the stepped layout would only add to the harm that would be caused to the established fairly uniform building line of properties on Peterborough Road.
7. My attention has been drawn to the properties at 47a, 49 and 73 Revesby Road and the relationship that these properties have with the building lines of properties on Quarr Road and Pipewell Road. Both Nos 47a and 49 benefit from planning permission. However, the former pre-dates the adoption of SPD14, while the latter pre-dates the designation of the ASLC and the adoption of SPD14. The alignment of Quarr Road and Pipewell Road are both curved unlike Peterborough Road. I do not therefore consider these two examples to be directly comparable to the appeal scheme. The case at No 73 is also different in that there is a single storey extension to the side of this property which is a different form of development to the proposal. The appellant has also cited the two storey side extension at 26 Sibton Road which is on the corner of Sibton Road and Sherbourne Crescent. However, as No 26 is not within the ASLC, the circumstances between No 26 and the appeal scheme are not the same.
8. The pylon opposite the site nor the proposed use of materials alter or outweigh my view that the proposal would lead to significant harm to the character and appearance of the ASLC. Consequently, the proposal would not accord with policies 28 and 30 of the Sutton Local Plan 2016-2031 (Local Plan), policies 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan (LP) and SPD14. Jointly, these expect development within an ASLC, among other things, to conserve and, where practicable, enhance those elements which contribute to the ASLC's particular character or appearance. Regard is required to be given to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces.

Living conditions

9. The main parties disagree as to whether the appeal scheme would facilitate a 1 or a 2-bedroom dwelling. The dispute focusses on the room within the proposed roof space of the dwelling. Based on the submitted plans this is shown to be used as a home office.
10. It is submitted by the Council that as a result of the loft space meeting the

minimum internal space standard for a single bedroom as set out in the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (THS), the proposal has been assessed as a three storey (two storey dwelling with loft accommodation) 2-bedroomed dwelling with bed spaces for 3 people. The appellant does not dispute the size of the room but does outline that access to the loft space can only be gained from within the first-floor bedroom.

11. I understand and share the Council's concerns about the proposed dwelling potentially being advertised to future occupants as a 2-bedroom property. However, looking at the proposal's functionality, if the loft space was used as a bedroom, future occupants would need to pass through the first-floor bedroom each time they go to and from the loft space to other parts of the dwelling, including the first-floor bathroom. Practically, this would affect the functionality of the loft space if it were used as a bedroom and there would be little privacy for the occupants of the first-floor bedroom, especially given that no internal doors are detailed for either the loft space or the first-floor bedroom.
12. To overcome the issue of privacy, changes would be needed to the internal layout of the proposed dwelling. The result of this could mean that the first-floor bedroom would be smaller and possibly fall short of the standards detailed in the THS and LP Policy 3.5. Taking these matters into account, I do not agree with the Council's assessment that the proposed dwelling is a 2-bedroomed unit. As it would be a 1-bedroom dwelling, and as there are no concerns raised about the internal living space of the property if it were considered on this basis, I conclude, on this issue, that the proposed development would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupants, with regards to internal living space. The proposal would accord with Local Plan Policy 9 and LP Policy 3.5; which jointly seek new homes to have adequately sized rooms and convenient and efficient room layouts which are functional and fit for purpose, meet the changing needs of Londoners over their lifetimes.

Conclusion

13. The proposed dwelling would not result in harm in terms of neighbouring occupants outlook, privacy or light. Future occupants would also be near to a range of facilities and services and benefit from amenity space and on-site car parking provision. The proposal would result in the efficient use of land and contribute towards the supply and mix of houses in the area. I have also found no harm from the appeal scheme in relation to the second main issue, but these matters are outweighed by the harm that I have found in relation to the scheme's impact on the character and appearance of the ASLC.
14. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR