



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2019 by Elizabeth Davies BSc (Hons) PIEMA

Decision by S M Holden BSc MSc CEng MICE CTPP FCIHT MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/D/19/3238254

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 DM2019/00964 dated 6 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is a side extension at ground and first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural matter

3. Planning permission has been granted at the appeal property for a single storey side extension (reference: C2017/77085). The proposal before me would provide additional accommodation at first floor level above this approved scheme.
4. At the time of my site visit the foundations of the ground floor extension were in place, but no other works had taken place.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. No 40, is one of a group of four, almost identical, modern, detached properties within a short spur off Coleridge Avenue. Their common features, including scale, orientation and design, provide a strong sense of rhythm and uniformity to the appearance of the cul-de-sac as a whole. In addition to the group of four dwellings, there is also a large new build dwelling (No 38A) accessed from the cul-de-sac. This is sited between the rear of 83 Shirley Avenue and No 40. The front elevation of No 38A is orientated towards the front and side elevations of No 40 but there is a gap between the dwellings. This provides views of mature

landscaping at the rear of the properties and an important sense of space between the dwellings.

7. The proposed extension would double the width of the dwelling at first floor level. The catslide roof, with its extensive areas of tiling would give the house an unbalanced and lopsided appearance. Although the ridge height would be lower than that of the host property, this would be insufficient to alleviate the imposing and disproportionate nature of the extension. It seems to me that the shape and style of the roof would make the building appear much more bulky, as well as being out of keeping with the scale of the existing house. Furthermore, the limited setback at ground floor and the lack of any setback at first floor from the front elevation would contribute to the extension appearing prominent and unacceptably large. The use of matching materials would not address the more fundamental issues of scale and design.
8. The proposed extension would also disrupt the uniformity of the group of four properties on the spur road. All four properties have the same roof design with a side dormer window at first floor. The loss of this common feature and the additional height, width and bulk of the extension would result in the appeal property appearing out of keeping with the rest of the group. I accept that some variation between the properties now exists, including the addition of a single storey side extension at No 46. However, that extension is of a different design and is not prominent in the street scene. It is therefore not directly comparable with the appeal scheme.
9. The extension would also significantly reduce the gap between No 40 and No 38A when viewed from Coleridge Avenue, reducing the visibility of the mature vegetation to the rear in a manner that would be harmful. In my view, this would not be alleviated by the provision of a catslide roof. Whilst it is acknowledged that a ground floor extension already has planning approval at the appeal property the proposal before me is considerably larger. Some of the gap between No 40 and No 38A would be lost if the single storey extension was implemented, but the loss at first floor level that would occur as a result of the current proposal would significantly reduce the sense of space between the buildings.
10. The development would therefore have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the wider area. This would be contrary to Policy 28 of Sutton Local Plan 2016-2031 (February 2018) which seeks, amongst other things, to ensure new development respects the local context and responds to local character and is of a suitable scale, massing and height. It would also be contrary to the Supplementary Plan Document Design of Residential Extensions (October 2006) (SPD4) which seeks to ensure that gaps are maintained between dwellings when they are a characteristic of the street, and that two storey side extensions appear as subordinate additions with clear setbacks. I note that the examples provided in SPD4 to illustrate these points are of terrace dwellings, but the principle applies to all types of dwellings where these issues arose.

Other Matters

11. My attention has been drawn to examples of properties in the vicinity that have extended, including No 38 and No 36. However, these are within part of Coleridge Avenue characterised by properties of a different style and

appearance. These examples are therefore not directly comparable with the appeal proposal and have had little influence on my consideration of it.

12. I appreciate that the extension would provide more living space for the appellant's family. However, this private benefit would be outweighed by the permanent harm to the appearance of the house and the wider street scene. The absence of harm to the living conditions of neighbours is not a factor in the scheme's favour.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Elizabeth Davies

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR