



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 18 May 2021

by Scott Britnell MSC FdA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/D/20/3263133

1 Conway Road, West Wimbledon, London SW20 8PB

- 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 Ms Wortman and Mr Peratides against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 20/P1937, dated 9 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is side and roof extensions to an existing detached house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has provided a Daylight and Sunlight Report with the appeal which was not part of the application submission. Because this case is being dealt with under the Householder Appeals Service, neither the Council nor any interested parties have had an opportunity to review this document and make representations upon it. Consequently, in the interests of fairness and natural justice, I shall not consider it in my assessment of the appeal proposal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - The character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area; and,
 - The living conditions of the occupants of No 3 Conway Road, with particular regard to daylight and sunlight.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. Conway Road consists of detached dwellings of varied form and appearance, with a number having been extended, including at roof level. Nevertheless, there is a sense of cohesiveness within the streetscene as a result of the use of common materials and the overall scale of dwellings.
5. The appeal dwelling at No 1 Conway Road is a well-proportioned building that sits within a wide plot. Due to its form and overall design, with the front elevation benefitting from a pleasing sense of symmetry, the dwelling makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the streetscene and the area.

6. The proposal would retain sufficient gaps to neighbouring dwellings so that it would not appear cramped within the streetscene. However, the proposal would significantly and disproportionately increase the height, scale and mass of the appeal dwelling, which would become subsumed with extensions so that its existing form and scale would no longer be appreciable.
7. Although it would be set back from the front elevation of the host dwelling, the proposed extension to the northwest elevation would raise the ridge height to the main dwelling and would appear as an over-dominant addition. It would compete with the front elevation, which is the main focal point of the building, and would significantly dilute its character. This would be exacerbated by the addition of the proposed dormer extension, which would appear to extend over the existing main ridge line, adding additional bulk. The proposed extension to the south elevation would create a valley between its roof and the main roof of the dwelling resulting in a visually awkward relationship. Moreover, the distinct designs, form and scale of both side extensions would compete with each other, as well as the host dwelling, and would significantly unbalance its sense of symmetry.
8. As such, the proposal would fail to pay regard to the form and scale of the host dwelling or achieve a successful level of subservience to it. This would be exacerbated by the use of large areas of glazing on both side extensions as well as the mixed form, scale and positioning of fenestration upon the extension to the south elevation. This would fail to reflect or otherwise respect the form, design, size and layout of fenestration on the existing dwelling. In respect of the extension to the south elevation, in particular, it would result in a haphazard and incongruous appearance.
9. The use of the proposed black timber panelling would be at odds with the materials of surrounding dwellings. I observed that the use of timber on dwellings in Conway Road is largely restricted to mock Tudor beams, as displayed on the front elevation of the appeal dwelling, and not used to cover large areas of buildings. Consequently, the proposal would fail to relate appropriately to surrounding buildings, would appear incongruous within the streetscene and would noticeably diminish the contribution that the dwelling makes to the area, causing harm to its character and appearance.
10. I am mindful of the variation in form of dwellings in the area and that a number have been extended. However, the extensions that I observed appear to relate well to the host dwellings and there are none that appear similar to the proposed development. Moreover, I do not consider that the new dwelling at No 2 Conway Road, which I am advised has been reconstructed using a 'kit house', provides compelling justification for the proposal. It is different in style, form and scale to the proposal before me.
11. The appellants suggest that a number of alterations and extensions could be made to the property under Permitted Development rights. I have been provided with a number of drawings illustrating what works may be carried out. As these works would fail to offer the standard or type of accommodation provided in the appeal scheme, I am far from convinced that this represents a realistic or likely fallback position.
12. I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area, in conflict with Policy CS14 of the London Borough of Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy Adopted July 2011

and Policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Map Adopted July 2014 (SPP). In summary, these policies require development to respect, reinforce and enhance the local character of the area and relate positively and appropriately to the scale, height and massing of surrounding buildings. Extensions to buildings will be expected to respect the form, scale, bulk and proportions of the original building.

Living Conditions

13. The property at No 3 Conway Road (No 3) does not sit square with the appeal dwelling so that there is a larger gap between the dwellings at the rear than the front. There are a number of windows in the side elevation facing the appeal dwelling. The occupant of that property indicates that the ground floor windows serve a dining room, kitchen, which also has a glass door, and a cloakroom. To the first floor, there are two windows. One serves a bathroom and is obscure glazed, the other serves an en-suite bathroom and is clear glazed.
14. While the proposal would raise the height of the appeal dwelling, it would retain a gap with No 3. Given this and the existing relationship between the two properties, whereby No 3 sits to the northwest of the appeal dwelling, I do not consider that the proposal would result in a loss of daylight or sunlight over and above the existing situation.
15. I conclude that the proposal would not result in harm to the living conditions of the occupants of No 3 Conway Road, and would accord with Policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the SPP. These require, amongst other things, that developments ensure the provision of appropriate levels of sunlight and daylight to adjoining buildings and do not diminish the living conditions of existing residents.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, having considered the development plan as a whole, the approach in the National Planning Policy Framework, and all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Scott Britnell

INSPECTOR