



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 June 2022

by Robert Naylor BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/D/22/3296346

60 Greenwood Road, Mitcham CR4 1PE

- 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 Tulsie Khashidas against the decision of London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 21/P4277, dated 1 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as “retention of existing single storey extension used mainly as a sun lounge and shelter in the wet and cold weather”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I am obliged to use the description of the development as included on the planning application form which is different from how the Council described it on their decision. The development subject to this appeal is a single storey rear extension. This has been added as a secondary element to a pre-existing single storey rear extension.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area;
 - the effect of the development on the living conditions for the occupiers of adjoining properties with regard to outlook and privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is located on the southside of Greenwood Road, which is in a residential suburb, characterised by a mixture of mainly two-storey traditionally designed semi-detached and terrace properties. The properties are arranged in a close pattern, limiting views of the rear from the street. Many properties exhibit extensions and alterations to both the front and the rear elevations, providing a cohesive suburban design and form.
5. At the rear of the properties within the terrace, the character of the buildings are defined by modest gardens sloping away from the host properties. The appeal site has an existing single storey extension, of similar scale and depth

to a number of other extensions on neighbouring properties in the vicinity. There is a varied character with differences in the design of extensions with a noticeable lack of coherence or symmetry. The secondary rear addition abuts the existing single storey rear extension.

6. The secondary rear addition sits proud of the existing rear elevation reducing the size of the modest garden at the host property. As such the proposal provides substantial additional bulk and mass at the ground floor level. This, coupled with the existing extension appears out of proportion in relation to the host dwelling and the surroundings. As a result, this harms the character of the area, because it does not respond to the site's context in terms of layout, scale and appearance.
7. Furthermore, the choice of materials for the secondary rear addition is at odds with the surrounding materials. The existing external materials of the buildings nearby primarily consists of traditional elements such as brick, pebbledash and render. The use of shiny grey tiles and corrugated plastic sheeting does not respond well to the distinctiveness of the area, nor does it complement or enhance the character of the wider setting. These factors draw attention to the development. Views of the development from outside the site would be limited, given the position at the rear of the dwelling, alongside the terrace of adjoining buildings. However, this does not preclude the need to achieve good design as required by Policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan, March 2021 (LP); Policy CS14 of the Merton Core Planning Strategy, adopted July 2011(MCS) and Policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan adopted July 2014 (MSPP). Accordingly, the unsympathetic secondary rear addition would have a negative impact on the appearance of the host property and the surrounding area, where modest, traditionally designed extensions make up the prevailing character.
8. For these reasons, in relation to the first main issue, the development has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. In these respects, the development does not respond positively to the areas distinctiveness or improve overall design standard; nor does it reinforce and enhance local character and is unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of the area. As a consequence, it is contrary to the policies D3 and D4 of the LP; Policy CS14 of the MCS and Policies MSPP. The development would also be inconsistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) 2021, which amongst others, seeks high quality design.

Living conditions

9. The flanks of the secondary rear addition are in close proximity to the adjoining properties at Nos 58 and 62 Greenwood Road. The development also includes a raised floor at the ground level, which coupled with the open nature of the scheme provides a position from where additional views of the neighbouring gardens can be viewed.
10. With regard to No 62, there is an existing rear patio area, and also rear windows and doors that serve habitable rooms to that property. I noted on site, that the open flank elevation of the development, provides unobscured views at close quarters, of the garden, patio and rear elevation of this property. Whilst a degree of mutual overlooking exists and is to be expected in a suburban setting, the elevated position of the floor as well as the close proximity to the neighbouring property, together with the openness of the

structure mean that it provides an elevated vantage point. Consequently, this provides a greater loss of privacy to the further detriment of this neighbours living conditions.

11. There is a similarly tight arrangement with the adjoining property at No 58 Greenwood Road, albeit that the corrugated plastic sheeting has been extended in an attempt to mitigate overlooking. Nevertheless, the rear elevation of No 58 sits further back than both the existing extension, and the secondary rear addition, and as such the increased height and length of this flank elevation is substantial. Because of its bulk and closeness to the windows and door at No 58 the overall impact of the proposal would be oppressive and overpowering. As well as being visually intrusive, the outlook from within the adjoining habitable rooms would be significantly impaired.
12. In relation to this main issue, the development has a harmful effect on living conditions for the occupiers of adjoining properties with regard to outlook and privacy. The secondary rear addition causes significant and unacceptable harm to the quality of living conditions, amenity space and privacy, to both Nos 58 and 62 Greenwood Road. The development thereby conflicts with Policy DM D2 of the MSPP. This policy, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure a good quality of living conditions, amenity space and privacy. It would also be contrary to the Framework which, amongst other things, also seeks a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of buildings.

Other Matters

13. The appellant draws my attention to the principle of the development being acceptable and that the development optimises the potential of the site which provides useful accommodation for their family. However, the principle of the scheme is not in dispute, and it is the specifics of how the development has been constructed that results in the above conclusions on the main issues. These matters do not outweigh my conclusion on the main issues or that the development plan as a whole, is not complied with.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Naylor

INSPECTOR