Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 August 2023

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th September 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/D/23/3320695
202 Buckland Way, Worcester Park KT4 8NP

- 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 N Vasanthakumar against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
- The application Ref DM2023/00190, dated 8 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 29 March 2023.
- The proposed development is for the conversion of loft space involving raising of ridge height, a dormer extension at rear and rooflights to front roofslope.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development having regard to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two-storey, mid-terrace house with off-street parking on the driveway to the front. The local neighbourhood is predominantly residential in nature.

4. I saw at my site visit that the appeal dwelling forms part of a terrace of six houses with hip ends and gable features to the end units. There is a staggered ridge line within the row, whereby every two houses the ridge line steps down to accommodate the fall in land level in a broadly north-westerly direction. This pleasing arrangement is repeated elsewhere in the streetscene, including on the opposite side of Buckland Way.

5. The appeal proposal would disrupt this pattern, and appear incongruous within the context of the neighbourhood. I am also of the view that incorporating the increase in roof height into the mass and bulk of the rear dormer window would not be an appropriate solution. This would result in an element that would dominate the roof of the house. It would be clearly visible from the private amenity spaces of surrounding houses, having a jarring effect by virtue of its scale and extent across the roof of the dwelling. The dormer would lack subservience to the new ridge line, and there would be no separation from the party walls to either flank.

6. I recognise that the appeal property is not listed or in a conservation area and no objections have been raised by local residents. Moreover, the proposal has been reduced in size since a previous refusal by the Council and could otherwise benefit from permitted development rights were it not for the increase in ridge height, and it would improve the standard of living space for the appellant and his family. However, these matters do would outweigh the harm identified above.

7. I also appreciate that there may be other instances of similar development in the local area, for example 54 Buckland Way. This notwithstanding, the Council's delegated report for this scheme states that "the ridge heights along this elevation of Buckland Way are not completely coherent", which is not the case in this instance as I have outlined above. In any event, development at other houses would be neutral considerations in any balance against planning harm, and I am mindful that each case must be assessed on its own merits.

8. I consider that the scheme would result in harm to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. It would contravene Policy 28 of the Sutton Local Plan 2018 and Supplementary Planning Document 4 'Design of Residential Extensions' (2006), which seek to secure development of an acceptable scale and design. It would also be inconsistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development,

Conclusion

9. Given the foregoing and in relation to all arguments put forward, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR