



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2023

by **Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 20 November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/D/23/3327409

187 Lower Morden Lane, Morden, Surrey SM4 4SP

- 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 and Mrs Pullen against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 23/P0837, dated 24 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as a 2 storey front extension and front tiled roof to form a porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to this 2 storey semi-detached house, which has previously been extended. The houses on this south side of Lower Morden Lane are all of a similar design. They appear to date from the inter-War period and display mock-Tudor elements and would have originally had hipped roofs and front bays.
4. The appeal property, despite its alterations, retains a number of these features and, notwithstanding an extension to the side, has a hipped roof. The existing first floor side extension is set back from the front of the main elevation of the house and the hipped roof is lower than the main roof of the house. The proposal is to extend the first-floor forwards so that it would be in line with the main elevation and to provide a projecting porch at the ground floor. The form of the roof would be altered to provide a roof with a maximum height matching the existing one and with a half-hipped/half gabled side element. Part of the proposed roof would also be flat.
5. The proposed alterations would mean that the extension to the house would lose any sense of subservience to the main house. At present, the first-floor set-back and the lower hipped roof mean that the extension is less dominant than the original house. The proposed roof design would also remove an original design feature which is characteristic of the houses on this side of the

- road with their distinctive appearance. I consider that the proposed extension and alterations would appear unduly large and cumbersome and would fail to be characteristic of the design of these dwellings within this area. This would be particularly noticeable as the appeal property is in a prominent location and its flank elevation is visible in the street-scene.
6. The appellant has included reference and photographs of other extensions and dwellings in the area and I saw these at my visit. The design and appearance of the houses on the opposite, northern side of Lower Morden Lane are quite different to those on the south side; their designs vary and their roof forms are not consistent. The presence of a single pair of houses at Nos 176/178 with half hipped/half gabled roof is an isolated example of that roof form; it appears to be an original feature on a house with a completely different design and appearance to the consistent features of the houses on the south side, including the appeal site.
 7. It is clear that many house on this side of Lower Morden Lane have been extended, including a first-floor side extension. Those at Nos 115/117 have much lower roofs and hipped at the side, quite different to the appeal scheme and that at No 89 is much lower, even though its truncated roof has a gable appearance at the side. Those at Nos 123 and 107 have bays on the extensions; this is not a feature of the appeal scheme, although my view is that they are not entirely successful additions to the area and are not precedents that would be desirable to follow. The examples photographed at Nos 151 and 153 Lower Morden Lane are both different to the appeal scheme and so not directly relevant in my view. In addition, I have no details of the planning history of any of these examples. The appellant also refers to an approved extension at No 31 Lower Morden Lane but has not included any depiction by which I can compare it to the appeal scheme. For these reasons, I consider that none of these examples compel me to look differently on the appeal scheme.
 8. I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the appeal property along with its attached neighbour, as well as the locality in general. It would be contrary to Policy D3 of The London Plan (2021), Policy CS 14 of the London Borough of Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy (2011) and Policies DM D2 and DM D3 of the London Borough of Merton Local Plan-Sites and Policies Plan and Policies Maps (2014). Taking account of all matter raised, I find nothing sufficient to outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR