



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 August 2024 by N Unwin BSc (hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by Ben Plenty BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 November 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/W/23/3334448

58 Woodcote Avenue, Sutton, Wallington SM6 0QY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Paul Thurgood against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
 - The application Ref is DM2023/00960.
 - The development proposed is described as the existing annex building to become a separate dwelling with an extension to the rear at ground floor level only.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is located within the Woodcote Avenue Area of Special Local Character (ASLC), designated within the Sutton Local Plan 2016 – 2031 (2018) (SLP). The ASLC describes the character of properties as being spacious, affording a good separation between houses, with the immediate area surrounding the appeal site reflective of this. Whilst the properties surrounding the appeal site vary in design and materials, they have a similar large, detached scale, possessing generous plot widths, bestowing this section of Woodcote Avenue with an open quality.
5. The appeal site, much like that of its surroundings, forms a substantial detached dwelling set back from the highway by an expansive front garden. The significant width of the plot creates ample separation between the appeal dwelling and that of the neighbouring properties, positively contributing to the character identified within the ASLC. Two, two-storey outbuildings are located within the front garden of the appeal site. Their proximity to the main dwelling, lack of any formal separation of the front garden, and comparatively diminutive scale identify these as being subservient outbuildings to the appeal property.

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6. The proposal would convert the two-storey outbuilding located closest to the boundary with 56 Woodcote Avenue, which currently provides ancillary accommodation to No. 58, to a dwelling. The proposal would utilise an existing vehicular access with a ranch style fence delineating the front boundary with no. 58 forming a notably narrower plot width than that of the surrounding dwellings.
 7. The existing outbuilding and the appearance of the site would appear relatively unchanged when viewed from the highway. Nonetheless, the formal separation with no. 58 would identify the site as a separate dwelling and it would therefore be viewed in that context. As such, the proposal would create a scale of dwelling and plot size that would be significantly smaller than the neighbouring dwellings, eroding the existing character of the area and this part of the ASLC. It would thus appear uncharacteristic and at odds with the surrounding large, detached properties and their generous plot widths. Despite some screening provided by the front boundary hedge, the proposed boundary treatment with no. 58 would be visible from the highway through the sizable vehicular access, emphasising the uncharacteristic form of the proposed development.
 8. Accordingly, the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance of the area and this part of the ASLC, conflicting with the relevant provisions of Policies H2 and D3 of the London Plan (2021) (LP) and Policies 1, 7, 28 and 30 of the SLP which, when read together, require new development to be well-designed, respect the local context and respond to local character in addition to requiring development within an Area of Special Local Character to conserve and, where practicable, enhance those elements which contribute to the Area of Special Local Character's.
 9. The decision notice references Policy H1 of the LP which relates to increasing housing supply and not directly to the proposal's effect on the character and appearance of the area. As such I find no conflict with this policy in this regard.

Other Matters

10. The appellant makes reference to approval DM2019/01547 at 47 Park Hill Road. Being approximately 250 metres from the proposal, it does not form part of the immediate setting of the appeal site. Furthermore, there is a greater variation in the character of the built environment and plot widths within this area. Notably no. 47 and 49 Park Hill Road are modest semi-detached dwellings with the substantial buildings and plots of Saint Patrick's Church and Woodcote Hall on the opposite side of the highway. Therefore, the approval is not comparable to this appeal.
11. The appellant makes reference to approval DM2021/00366 approximately 300 metres from the proposal and as such does not form part of the immediate setting of the appeal site. Furthermore, the approval was for a replacement dwelling and as such not comparable to this appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposed development would conflict with the development plan, when taken as a whole, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Unwin

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Ben Plenty

INSPECTOR