
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 March 2025

by **C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P5870/D/25/3358498

Maple House, Woodmansterne Lane, Wallington, Sutton SM6 0SU

- 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 & Mrs Antonvijayarajah against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Sutton.
 - The application Ref. is DM2024/01073.
 - The development proposed is for a double storey rear and side extension, single storey rear extension, erection of front porch and alteration to the roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on a) the character and appearance of the local area; and b) the living conditions of the occupiers of April Dew in respect of privacy and overbearing impact.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is a detached, two-storey house with off-street parking on a driveway to the front. The street scene comprises detached and semi-detached dwellings set in relatively large plots, with a garden centre and school also in the vicinity. There is no prevailing architectural style to other houses in the street scene, which is characterised by buildings of differing size, design, detailing and external materials.
4. The current dwelling has a natural affinity within its plot and the wider setting, and the gaps to the side boundaries at first floor level afford a general feeling of spaciousness. Conversely, the appeal proposal would have a greater depth, width and height, which would overwhelm the existing property. To my mind, the inclusion of a considerable extent of crown roof is indicative of an overdeveloped, deep plan form. The end result would be a building that would be significantly larger in volume, bulk and mass than that which presently exists on site, nearly doubling the floor area and spanning most of the width of the site.
5. Moreover, the cumulative impact of the mass and bulk at upper floor levels, together with the increase in two-storey depth that would be clearly evident from the public highway between the buildings, would result in a cramped appearance that would be dominant and obtrusive within the context of the local street scene. The sheer scale of the proposal would overpower the dwellings to either side, and lack any sense of subservience in relation to the current property. This would fail to reflect the character and appearance of the site or improve the setting.

6. I appreciate that the locality comprises residences of varying size and design. However, the appeal proposals would involve detrimental extensions to an existing building, and I have no evidence that there are other such instances in the neighbourhood that are comparable to the scheme before me. I note the appellant's reference to the alterations elsewhere in the environs, however most of these pre-date the current Development Plan. Moreover, these developments do not involve excessive extensions at upper floor levels, whilst 248 Woodcote Road relates to a block of flats, not a single house. In any event, the appearance of other buildings would be a neutral consideration in any balance against planning harm, and I am heedful that each case must be assessed on its own merits.
7. I acknowledge those other matters that have been advanced in support of the development; the existing dwelling does not form part of a conservation area and is of no heritage value, the development would be constructed in materials to match, and the roof pitch would be unchanged. However, none of these points could justify the harm I have identified above.
8. I therefore conclude that the scheme would result in detriment to the character and appearance of the local area. It would fail Policy 28 of the Sutton Local Plan 2018 (LP) and the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 4: The Design of Residential Extensions (SPD), which together seek to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance.

Living conditions

9. At the rear of the appeal site lies April Dew, a bungalow which is accessed via an access track between Maple House and Sunridge. The substantial rearward extent of the proposal would mean that the relationship between the appeal building and the bungalow would be more direct, and the distance between the first floor windows and the private amenity area at the back of April Dew much closer. Consequently, the new bedroom windows would be afforded clear views over the neighbouring rear garden, which to my mind would increase the potential for privacy issues between the dwellings, and would be deleterious to the living conditions of the occupants of April Dew.
10. At my site visit I saw that the rear elevation and back garden of April Dew have a southerly orientation facing away from the appeal site towards mature trees, and there is a closeboard fence on the common boundary to provide some intervening screening. With these factors in mind, I am of the view that the appeal proposal would not have such an excessively overbearing impact upon the living conditions of the occupants of April Dew as to warrant a refusal of permission on this ground.
11. Accordingly, whilst the scheme would not be overbearing, it would have a detrimental effect upon the living conditions of the occupants of April Dew in respect of a loss of privacy. It would be incompatible with Policy 29 of the LP and the SPD, which seek to ensure that development does not harm the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties.

Conclusion

12. Having regard to the arguments above and all other issues presented, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR