



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 August 2025

by **R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCIArb MCIL**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 August 2025

Appeal Reference: APP/T5720/D/25/3367501

16 Whitfield Court, rear of 508 Kingston Road, Raynes Park, London SW20 8DT

- 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 Kolawole Oluwunmi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application reference is 25/P0557.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as “Redevelopment of an existing single storey dwelling to create a modern two storey home”.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary point

2. The name of the applicant and appellant is not given in either the planning application form or the appeal form but it has been clarified in e-mail correspondence and is included in the banner heading, above.

Main issues

3. The first main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surroundings. The second is the effect of the proposed development on the residential amenities of neighbours (whether unacceptable harm would be caused by overbearing impact on neighbours’ outlook or by intrusion on their privacy).

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in Raynes Park, within a suburban area of South London that has good access to local services and to the public transport network. This part of Kingston Road is a busy road that lies to the north of the A298 (Bushey Road) through route. These two stretches of main road run roughly parallel to each other, linked by residential roads that are generally lined with Victorian terraced houses.
5. The appeal site is located between two of these residential roads, Sydney Road and Dupont Road, where a narrower cul-de-sac has been created at Whitfield Court. Access to the cul-de-sac is obtained from Kingston Road, through an archway in the building terrace on its southern frontage. The northern part of Whitfield Court (nearer to the access point) provides parking spaces for nearby

residents but a small number of dwellings has also been built, further along the cul-de-sac.

6. The dwellings along the cul-de-sac are modest single storey buildings in contrast to the terraces of larger two-storey houses that line Sydney Road and Dupont Road, either side, whose gardens back on to Whitfield Court. A number of these two-storey houses have dormer extensions on their rear elevations. Most of the bungalows in Whitfield Court are traditional in architectural style and materials, although some have a more contemporary character.
7. Number 16 Whitfield Court is a modest two-bedroom bungalow, constructed of brickwork with a shallow pitched roof. It has an interesting contemporary architectural character, however, with striking arched details in the external elevations. To the north of the building (nearer the main road) the plot includes a parking area, while there is a small private garden to the south, which is evidently well used.
8. It is now proposed to redevelop the existing single-storey dwelling, to create a modern two-storey home.
9. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, although it is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities. The achievement of good design includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation in new development.
10. Policies in the Development Plan also share these basic principles. Notably, Policy D12.3 in the 'Merton Local Plan' is aimed at "ensuring high quality design for all developments". The design of proposed development "should respond positively to the site's context and character" and should achieve high standards of amenity for the occupiers of both the new development and its surroundings.
11. In this case, the proposed two-storey building would have a very significantly greater bulk than the existing bungalow. It would be higher than the ridge line of the existing bungalow, while the two storey elevations would create a much more intrusive building volume, in visual terms, than the existing single-storey eaves heights. In consequence, the subservient and low key nature of Whitfield Court, which has something of the character of a traditional mews layout, would be undermined. The proposed development would create a large two-storey building, in an awkward layout, with a disproportionately small plot size.
12. Thus, the proposed development would be inimical to the existing context and out of keeping with the character of the area.
13. The finished building would be set back from the rear gardens of properties to the east and west, by the widths of a driveway and a pedestrian path, respectively but, even so, the new development would have a direct and negative impact on the outlook from nearby properties. The bulk of the proposed building, when complete, would have an oppressive effect on the rear gardens of the houses to the west and, hence, would unduly intrude on these neighbours' amenities.

14. The introduction of a two-storey building in place of the existing bungalow, might have given rise to concerns about overlooking neighbours' properties. In reality, however, the proposed new house would not have first floor windows giving rise to unacceptable overlooking. Even so, the design would create long blank walls at first floor level. Their visual impact would be mitigated, to some extent, by the innovative design approach, introducing relief to the blank surfaces, but the two-storey building would have a harmful effect on neighbours' outlook, nevertheless, because of its bulk and visual intrusiveness.
15. The detailed design of the proposed building would be contemporary in style, and unlike its neighbours in its detailing. Nevertheless, a contemporary style could be appropriate in this subsidiary location, where it would not appear alongside the more traditional streetscenes of terraced houses in Sydney Road and Dupont Road. The architectural style of the proposed building would not be objectionable in itself.
16. Nonetheless, its bulk and visual intrusiveness do give rise to serious objections to the project. The scheme would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surroundings generally and it would have an overbearing impact on neighbours' outlook.
17. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed development would make a useful addition to the existing house. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the objections that I have identified clearly outweigh the benefits of the project. Hence, I have concluded that the scheme before me would conflict with both national and local planning policies (including the Development Plan) and that it ought not to be allowed.
18. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR