
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2025

by **Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/W/25/3365258

155 Hartfield Road, Wimbledon, Merton SW19 3TJ

- 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 Benjamin Baulkwill against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref is 25/P0532.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single-story rear/side extension; rear roof extension with balcony; front dormer extension: installation of solar panels to flat roof of loft extension; and installation of an air source heat pump.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the interest of accuracy and conciseness, the description of development in the banner heading is based on the decision notice. I have determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. Hartfield Road has a varied character, including traditional Victorian and Edwardian terraces, semi-detached houses of slightly larger proportions, more modern developments of three storeys, a flat-roofed community centre and a single bungalow. Opposite the appeal site is a recently built building with a modern roof and front dormers. Nevertheless, the appeal property sits within a highly consistent run of two-storey terraced housing, with pitched roofs and an unbroken roofline that is an important contributor to the quality of the street scene.
5. The appeal property occupies a mid-terrace position close to the junction with Graham Road, where its roofline is particularly visible in longer views. The consistency of this terrace is a defining element of local character.
6. The proposed front dormer would introduce a flat-roofed structure spanning much of the roof width. Its box-like bulk would create a prominent third storey above the façade, disrupting the proportions of the building and the continuity of the roofline. Both the appellant and a supporting neighbour refer to the dormer being set back from the eaves to minimise visual impact. While this is noted, the overall scale and

breadth of the addition would remain such that it would be the dominant feature of the roofscape, reading as an intrusive and top-heavy element in views along the terrace.

7. The appellant also highlights other roof alterations along Hartfield Road, including front dormers, mansard roofs and the modern development opposite. However, those examples relate to redeveloped or larger buildings, or to terrace groups without the same intact roofscape. Moreover, where dormers do exist on traditional terraces, they are smaller in scale than what is proposed here, and therefore not directly comparable. The presence of such alterations does not justify the harm that would arise in this case.
8. Although the appellant proposes the use of reclaimed and matching materials, including natural slate tiles and sympathetic finishes, this would not mitigate the harm identified. The excessive bulk, scale and form of the dormer would remain discordant with the existing dwelling and the terrace as a whole.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It would conflict with Policies D12.3 and D12.4 of the Merton Local Plan insofar as they seek to ensure that proposals achieve high quality design and respect the character of existing buildings and surrounding context.

Other Matters

10. The appellant and a neighbour refer to the dormer providing more usable internal accommodation, including space for an additional bedroom and bathroom. While I acknowledge the benefit to the living conditions of future occupiers, this would be a private gain that attracts only limited weight and would not outweigh the identified harm to the character of the terrace and streetscene.
11. Reference has also been made to energy efficiency gains, sustainable materials and to the design being carefully considered, and to the evolving architectural character of the wider street. While these matters are noted, they attract only modest weight and do not alter my conclusion on the harm to character and appearance.
12. The rear extensions and alterations, including the proposed roof terrace, would be absorbed within a context of varied rear elevations and would not cause harm in themselves. Nonetheless, this does not outweigh the unacceptable harm identified in relation to the proposed front dormer.

Conclusion

13. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
14. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

INSPECTOR