



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 October 2025

by **J D Westbrook BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/W/25/3368326

13 & 14 Heatherdene Close, Mitcham, CR44EU

- 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 Mr Toyab Ali against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref is 24/P2327
 - the development proposed is the construction of a single-storey, first-floor rear and part side wrap-around extensions to each property in the form of a joint scheme.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Decision Notice and other earlier documentation make reference to policies in the Council's Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Plan. The Council has since adopted a new Local Plan. I have used reference to Policies from the new Local Plan which supersede those in the earlier plans, but which follow the same basic thrust and detail as those earlier policies.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed joint scheme on:
 - The character and appearance of the area around Heatherdene Close, and
 - The living conditions of the occupiers of No 15 Heatherdene Close by way of light and outlook.

Reasons

4. Nos 13 and 14 are a pair of semi-detached houses situated at the south-eastern end of Heatherdene Close. They appear as a matching pair with identical front elevations and single-storey side/rear extensions. They share a combined rear garden with a single means of rear access via a gate and passage to the west of No 13 and to the rear of Nos 6-12 Heatherdene Close. There is a run of large outbuildings along the rear boundary of the combined properties. The proposed development would involve the construction of a continuous wrap-around first-floor extension, above the existing ground floor extensions, to the side and rear of the dwellings, which would project two metres from the existing side elevations of each house and two metres beyond the existing first-floor rear elevation. There would be a dummy hipped roof running around the full extent of the proposed extension.

5. Policy D3 of the London Plan indicates that all development must make the best use of land by following a design-led approach, which requires consideration of design options to determine the most appropriate form of development that responds to a site's context.
6. Policy D12.1 of the Council's new Local Plan (LP) requires that development will be supported if it is designed according to well established principles of good design as referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), practice guidance, and development plan policies, and has regard to policy guidance.
7. Policy D12.3 of the LP requires that development proposals for all development should take a design-led approach that responds positively to the site's context and character. They should enhance local distinctiveness by responding positively to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, height, materials and massing of surrounding buildings and existing street patterns of the surrounding area. In addition they should demonstrate that acceptable light and outlook would be available to existing and future occupants of the proposed development and its surroundings, so that a high standard of amenity is provided.
8. Policy D12.4 of the LP indicates that to achieve high quality design and protection of amenity within the borough, alterations or extensions to buildings will be expected to be of high quality design that responds to local character; respect the form, scale, bulk, and proportions of the original building; and ensure that visual disturbance resulting from the development, including overshadowing, does not diminish the living conditions of existing and future residents.
9. The Council contends that the proposal, by reason of its combined siting, design, scale, bulk and height results in a visually intrusive, dominant, incongruous and unsympathetic form of overdevelopment that is harmful the form, proportion and appearance of the host dwellings and the appearance of the character of the Heatherdene Close. In addition, by reason of its combined siting, height and depth along the common boundary, it would result in a visually intrusive, overbearing and dominant form of development that would create a sense of enclosure and potential impact on daylight/sunlight and overshadowing to the detriment of the amenity of nearby occupants, in particular, No 15 Heatherdene Close.

Character and appearance

10. Heatherdene Close comprises mainly short rows of two-storey terraced houses. The appeal properties are situated towards the south-eastern end of the cul-de-sac and are sited between terraced properties to the west and two bungalows to the east. The prevailing character and appearance of the area is of relatively small dwellings with varied designs and, most typically, with hipped roofs.
11. Nos 13 and 14 appear as mirror images of each other in the street scene, with a similar basic design to the terraced houses opposite, but with front porches linked to identical front/side single-storey side extensions and with gable-ended roof alterations as opposed to the more characteristic hipped version. The side extensions continue round to the rear of the houses in a wrap-around fashion, and there is a full width pair of flat-roofed rear dormers occupying almost all of the rear roof slope, and with a Juliet balcony within each. The rear garden is combined into one element and there is a range of outbuildings at the rear of the houses. There is a small outhouse connected to the rear of No 14 and a full-width set of large outbuildings along the rear boundary of the combined site. These include what

- appears to be a self-contained unit at the rear of No 14 with a canopy and door with letter box, and which also has a separate door to the paved access passageway at the rear with a letter box and No 1.A on it.
12. The pair of extended houses, combined with the outbuildings, already appear as a very cramped development on the site. The proposed development would increase the bulk of the dwellings with a wrap-around first floor to the side and rear which extend to the property boundary at each side. The increased accommodation at the pair of houses would result in significantly higher potential occupation levels, particularly if coupled with occupancy of the rear outbuilding as separate or ancillary accommodation, and this would put additional pressure on the small remaining amenity space at the rear.
 13. In my opinion, the proposed development would cause the pair of dwellings to appear out of scale and appearance with the rest of the street scene, particularly as the extended houses would be set alongside and opposite three bungalows clustered around the head of the cul-de-sac. Furthermore, the combination of the currently proposed extensions along with the earlier additions, including the ground-floor extensions, hip-to-gable alterations, full width/height dormers, and substantial outbuildings, would result in dwellings that would not respect and complement the design and detailing of the original building; would not respect the form, scale, bulk, and proportions of the original building; and would not complement the character and appearance of the wider setting along Heatherdene Close.
 14. I note that the dummy hipped roof running around the top of the proposed extensions would appear somewhat incongruous in the street scene when seen against the gable-ended roof of the main house. In addition, it would extend across the Juliet balconies and windows in the rear of the dormer extension, and I do not consider this to represent high-quality design.
 15. In conclusion on this issue, I find that the proposed extensions would result in a pair of houses that would appear overdeveloped on the combined plot. They would be, and would appear, significantly larger than other dwellings in the vicinity and not respect the prevailing character and appearance of the wider setting along Heatherdene Close, or the scale and design of the original host properties themselves. On this basis, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and would conflict with Policy D3 of the London Plan, and Policies D12.1, D12.3 and D12.4 of the LP.

Living conditions

16. The proposed side extension at No 14 would project to the boundary with the adjacent bungalow at No 15. It would result in a blank wall around 8.5 metres deep and 5 metres high running along almost the whole of the side elevation of the neighbouring property. The relative orientation of the dwellings would appear to effectively mitigate against excessive adverse impact caused by the proposed extension, with regard to overshadowing and sunlight received, to a short period during the afternoon. Nevertheless, the increased width and height of the extended property at No 14 would result in some limited adverse impact.
17. The bungalow at No 15 is sited very close to the boundary with the No 14, and the main door of No 15 is located in the side elevation, facing the side of the appeal property at a distance of little more than 1 metre. I have no details as to the internal

layout of No 15 but, in addition to the main door, there would appear to be a window in the side elevation. I consider that the presence of a long and high blank wall along the side of the bungalow, and in such close proximity, would be an over-dominant presence, and would result in an oppressive outlook from No 15.

18. On the basis of the above, I find that the proposed side extension to No 14 would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 15 by way of an oppressive outlook and, albeit to a much lesser extent, by way of some overshadowing and reduced light at the neighbouring property. It would, therefore, conflict with Policies D12.3 and D12.4 of the LP.

Conclusion

19. In conclusion, I find that the proposed side/rear extensions would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area around Heatherdene Close, and to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 15 Heatherdene Close by way of light and outlook. Accordingly, I dismiss this appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR