



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 September 2025 by S Wilson LL.B. MSc MRTPI

Decision by M Clowes BA (Hons) MCD PG CERT (Arch Con) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/W/25/3358366

190 Rowan Road, Streatham, Merton, London SW16 5HX

- 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 Aleksander Gazda against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref is 24/P2727.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'Loft conversion to the first floor flat.'
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. Since the original determination, the Council has formally adopted the Merton Local Plan (MLP) 2024. This now forms the statutory development plan for the area, substituting the policies contained within the Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014), that were in effect at the time of the Council's decision. The appellant was given the opportunity to comment on the revised policies, but no response was received. I am satisfied that no prejudice would occur from taking into account the MLP.
4. The Council has clarified that the appeal site is not located within a Conservation Area (CA) and that reference to this in its officer report was a mistake. Although the front elevation plan contains lines that appear to depict a front dormer, it is clear from the description of development and the proposed side elevations and floor plan, that the proposal does not include this form of development. For clarity, I have determined the appeal on the basis that the site is not located in a CA and the proposal does not include a front dormer.

Main Issue

5. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site comprises a 2-storey building with balanced fenestration, render above ground floor brickwork and an asymmetrical plain tiled roof with a hip to one

side. It is physically attached to a group of buildings which are of a different scale and architectural appearance including a half-hipped roof and front facing dormer windows with some commercial uses at ground floor level.

7. However, the appeal site shares its physical appearance with the adjacent terraces to the north-east and on the opposite side of the road, all of which have hipped roofs to either end of their respective blocks. Although there is variance elsewhere in the street scene, these terraces and style of property form the dominant architectural style in this locality. Properties have been personalised and altered over time, including replacement windows and the painting of the brickwork. However, these minor differences in appearance do not undermine the overall cohesiveness generated by the repeated house types including the prevalence of hipped roofs.
8. Whilst the appeal building has an almost semi-detached façade, its consistency of appearance with the neighbouring terraces means that it contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
9. The proposed hip to gable extension including the rear roof dormer, would introduce significant bulk to the roof of the appeal building. Although it would rectify the asymmetry of the roof, visible conflict with the predominant rhythm and pattern of the hipped roof forms within the street scene would occur. The proposal would remove an important architectural feature of the property and the wider area, whilst also eroding the gap between the appeal site and the adjacent terrace. In doing so it would affect the legibility of the street scene which has evolved over time.
10. The proposed rear dormer due to its siting and scale would further add a bulky extension to the rear roof slope, that would compete for attention with the existing 2-storey rear flat roofed outshot protruding above eaves level. Although rear dormer windows are found within the wider area, they are not a feature of the appeal site or its companion terrace to the north-east. The proposed rear dormer would therefore appear dominant and inharmonious in views from Stirling Close where it would be viewed in the context of the adjacent terrace roofs which have not been extended.
11. Reference is made to a similar proposal having been granted permission on the opposite side of the road under application reference 22/P2268. I observed that this has resulted in an asymmetrical appearance to the roof form of the host building such that it is not unlike the appeal site currently. The host building is, nonetheless, a different architectural style and form to the predominant pattern including the appeal site.
12. I have not been provided with any substantive evidence in relation to this development and I therefore cannot be certain what considerations lead to this decision. It seems to me from the date of the application as indicated in the prefix to the reference number, that it predated the current local plan. I am not satisfied that the proposal can be considered comparable to this example. Whether or not previous hip to gable extensions have been allowed would not justify removing an important architectural feature that would erode the character of the street scene.
13. For the above reasons, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. The proposal would conflict with Policies D12.1, D12.3 and D12.4 of the MLP and Policy D3 of the London Plan

(2021), insofar as they seek to achieve high quality design, that respects local distinctiveness, amongst other things.

Other Matters

14. Concerns relating to how the Council handled the application are a matter for the parties. Any suggested lack of engagement would not in any event outweigh the harm identified above

Conclusion and Recommendation

15. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Wilson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

M Clowes

INSPECTOR