

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 18 July 2019

APPLICATION NO.
19/P0635

DATE VALID
27/02/2019

Address/Site: 34-40 Links Avenue, Morden, SM4 5AA

Ward: Merton Park

Proposal: Erection of a three bedroom semi-detached dwellinghouse. Erection of roof extension and conversion of roof space to extend existing first floor flats (2 x 1 bedroom to 2 x 2 bedroom).

Drawing No.'s: 3440LA-PP1-01; 3440LA-PP1-02; 3440LA-PP1-03; 3440LA-PP1-04 Rev B; and 3440LA-PP1-05 Rev C.

Contact Officer: Thomas Frankland (020 8545 3114)

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to conditions and a S106 agreement.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- S106: Yes
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Statement been submitted: No
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: No
- Design Review Panel consulted: No
- Number of neighbours consulted: 10
- External consultations: 1
- Controlled Parking Zone: Yes (Zone M1)
- Flood zone: Flood Zone 1
- Conservation Area: No
- Listed building: No
- Protected Trees: 0
- Public Transport Access Level: 6a

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee for determination because of the number and nature of representations received in response to public consultation.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The application site is a roughly crescent shaped parcel of land measuring 730m². It is located in Morden and is sandwiched between Links Avenue, the rear gardens of properties on Hatherleigh Close, and the nearby railway line.
- 2.2. The site is currently developed with a two storey, detached dwelling, which has been converted into four one-bedroom flats (two each to the ground and first floors). There is a narrow, wedge-shaped communal garden to the rear of this, occupying the southern part of the site, while the northern part of the site contains a private car parking area, with spaces for five cars.
- 2.3. The building on the site is of an atypical design for the area. It has an irregular shape, varied fenestration and most notably (for a two storey building), an entirely flat roof. The walls of the building are finished with pebbledash.
- 2.4. The land on the site is largely flat but the central and southern sections, containing the flats and garden, are raised above the height of Links Avenue and are accessed from the pavement via a short set of steps. A retaining wall separates the car parking area, which is set lower, from the remainder of the site.
- 2.5. The area surrounding the site is entirely residential, consisting of two storey dwellings constructed in the immediate post-war period, laid out either in pairs of terraces of four to six units in length. Typically these properties feature enclosed, lean-to front porches and two storey bays, topped by small gables. The prevailing roof form is hipped, although in some cases hip-to-gable conversions have been carried out post-construction. The majority of the frontages have been given over to car parking, although some retain their original front gardens.
- 2.6. The site is located in Controlled Parking Zone M1 and has a PTAL of 6a (excellent).
- 2.7. The site falls within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk) and is not subject to any other environmental constraints.

3. CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection a new semi-detached dwelling and the erection of a mansard-style roof over the existing building to provide additional habitable accommodation to the existing first floor flats.
- 3.2. The new semi-detached dwelling would be attached to the northern flank wall of the existing building and would have three bedrooms set across three floors (two full storeys and accommodation within the roof space), providing space for five occupants. It would benefit from an L-shaped private garden located to its rear and northern side.
- 3.3. It would have a smooth render finish applied to its walls, save for some small sections of timber cladding. The windows would match the style of the existing building, while the front door would be timber clad. The mansard-style roof would host two small box dormers (one each to the northern and western slopes) but would otherwise be finished with plain tiles to match surrounding properties.
- 3.4. The new roof above the existing building would contain kitchen/dining rooms and living

rooms for the existing first floor flats, allowing each to gain a second bedroom at first floor level. It would fully integrate with the roof of the new semi-detached dwelling, including being punctuated at regular intervals by the same style of box dormer.

- 3.5. The finishes of the existing building would then be replaced to match the new dwelling, including replacement of the existing windows and doors.
- 3.6. The site currently accommodates four one bedroom flats. The proposals would result in the following accommodation:

Unit	Type	GIA	External Amenity
Flat 1 (GF)	1 bed / 2 person	50m ²	45m ²
Flat 2 (GF)	1 bed / 2 person	53m ²	30m ²
Flat 3 (1F/2F)	2 bed / 3 person	82m ²	None
Flat 4 (1F/2F)	2 bed / 3 person	99m ²	7m ²
New Dwelling	3 bed / 5 person	140m ²	55m ²

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

02/P0361: Formation of vehicular access through installation of a vehicle crossover.
Planning Permission Granted

5. **CONSULTATION**

Public consultation was undertaken by way of a site notice and by post sent to neighbouring properties. Five representations were received, raising objection to the proposed development on the following grounds:

- Loss of privacy
- Loss of outlook
- Loss of light
- Overshadowing
- Noise pollution
- Insufficient separation distance between the new dwelling
- The building would be out of scale with surrounding development
- The existing building is unattractive and the proposals would exacerbate this
- Insufficient car parking provision
- The new dwelling would not be built on brownfield land
- The proposals would likely reduce the value of surrounding properties

Internal consultees.

Waste Services: No objection

Transport Planner: No objection

External Consultees.

Network Rail: No objection

6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

London Plan (2016)

Relevant policies include:

- 3.4 Optimising Housing Potential
- 3.5 Quality and Design of Housing Developments
- 5.2 Minimising Carbon Dioxide Emissions
- 5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction
- 5.10 Urban Greening
- 5.13 Sustainable Drainage
- 5.15 Water Use and Supplies
- 5.17 Waste Capacity
- 6.3 Assessing Effects of Development on Transport Capacity
- 6.9 Cycling
- 6.10 Walking
- 6.13 Parking
- 7.2 An Inclusive Environment
- 7.3 Designing Out Crime
- 7.4 Local Character
- 7.6 Architecture
- 7.15 Reducing and Managing Noise
- 8.2 Planning Obligations
- 8.3 Community Infrastructure Levy

Merton Local Development Framework Core Strategy – 2011 (Core Strategy)

Relevant policies include:

- CS 3 Morden Sub-Area
- CS 9 Housing Provision
- CS 14 Design
- CS 15 Climate Change
- CS 16 Flood Risk Management
- CS 17 Waste Management
- CS 18 Active Transport
- CS 19 Public Transport
- CS 20 Parking, Servicing and Delivery

Merton Sites and Policies Plan – 2014 (SPP)

- DM D2 Design considerations in all developments
- DM D3 Alterations and Extensions to Existing Buildings
- DM F2 SuDS, Wastewater and Water Infrastructure
- DM T1 Support for Sustainable Transport and Active Travel
- DM T2 Transport Impacts of Development
- DM T3 Car Parking and Servicing Standards

Supplementary planning considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2018

- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Housing SPG 2016 (London Plan)
Character and Context SPG 2014 (London Plan)
Sustainable Design and Construction SPG 2014 (London Plan)
Accessible London SPG 2014 (London Plan)

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Key planning considerations:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Impact on Visual Amenity
- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity
- Standard of Accommodation
- Transport and Parking
- Waste and Recycling
- Sustainability

Principle of development

- 7.1. Policy 3.3 of the London Plan states that development plan policies should seek to identify new sources of land for residential development, including intensification of housing provision through development at higher densities. Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy encourages the development of additional dwellings within residential areas in order to meet London Plan targets.
- 7.2. The site has a PTAL rating of 6a, which is considered to be excellent. It is within a short walk of Morden town centre and consequently benefits from a wide range of amenities locally. The nearest bus stop is located a short distance away on Hillcross Avenue.
- 7.3. The site is located within an established residential area and the proposals would help achieve London Plan objectives by providing one additional dwelling and increasing the size of two others, making a modest contribution towards housing choice in the area and borough-wide housing targets.
- 7.4. The site is not subject to any other designations or environmental constraints which might fundamentally conflict with the type of development proposed. Therefore, notwithstanding the need to assess the impact of the development on visual and residential amenities, the principle of development may be considered acceptable.

Design and Impact on Visual Amenity

- 7.5. Policy 7.4 of the London Plan states that buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high quality design response that: has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets in orientation, scale, proportion and mass; contributes to a positive relationship between the urban structure and natural landscape features, including the underlying landform and topography of an area; is human in scale, ensuring buildings create a positive relationship with street level activity and people feel comfortable with their surroundings; allows existing buildings and structures that make a positive contribution to the character of a place to influence the future character of the area; is informed by the surrounding historic environment.
- 7.6. Policy 7.6 of the London Plan states that buildings and structures should: be of the

highest architectural quality; be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm; comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character; and not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate.

- 7.7. Policy CS 14 of the Merton Core Strategy states that all development needs to be designed in order to respect, reinforce and enhance the local character of the area in which it is located and to contribute to Merton's sense of place and identity. It seeks to achieve this, by promoting high quality sustainable design which: meets urban design and climate change objectives; responds to the "distinctive areas of the borough"; and improves Merton's overall design standard.
- 7.8. Policy DM D2 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan aims to achieve high quality design and protection of amenity within the borough. It states that proposals for all development will be expected to: relate positively and appropriately to the siting, rhythm, scale, density, proportions, height, materials and massing of surrounding buildings and existing street patterns, historic context, urban layout and landscape features of the surrounding area; and use appropriate architectural forms, language, detailing and materials which complement and enhance the character of the wider setting.
- 7.9. Policy DM D3 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan states that alterations or extensions to buildings will be expected to: respect and complement the design and detailing of the original building; respect the form, scale, bulk and proportions of the original building; use external materials that will be appropriate to the original building and to its surroundings; complement the character and appearance of the wider setting; and ensure that roof forms and materials are of an appropriate size, type, form and materials for the existing building, such that they are not unduly dominant, and respect the prevailing positive characteristics of the area.
- 7.10. The existing building on the site is of little architectural merit. It is a two storey, detached building of an irregular shape, topped by a flat roof. The front features two bay windows but the elevations otherwise lack any visual interest, consisting of pebbledash walls punctuated by very modest amounts of glazing. The significant bulk of the building is emphasised by its siting on land which is raised above the height of Links Avenue and its open, grassed frontage does little to soften its impact on the street scene.
- 7.11. The proposed two storey addition would be 5.7m wide and would project 10.3m northwards, offset slightly from the existing northernmost face of the existing building. It would have a simple, rectangular footprint and would be topped with a mansard-style roof, with the exception of a shallow, two storey bay window on its western face, which would have a hipped roof. A small, flat-roofed dormer would be erected centrally on its northern roof slope, set up from the eaves and down from the ridge where the slope would meet the flat section at the top of the roof.
- 7.12. The proposed roof addition to the existing part of the building would match the form of

that above the proposed extension, having a mansard form with steeply pitched slopes rising to a flat section approximately 2.4m above the height of the existing flat roof. The front slopes would be punctuated at regular intervals by flat-roofed dormers of the same style and dimensions proposed above the two storey addition.

- 7.13. Where the roof addition to the existing part of the building would adjoin that above the proposed extension, the front slope would ignore the offset nature of the extension, forming a recess within the central part of the front elevation. This recess would accommodate a balcony at first floor level.
- 7.14. Such significant extensions would add considerable bulk to the building. However, the visual effect of the additional bulk would be reduced by a good extent of glazing to those faces of the building which would address the street and the bulk would be further broken up by the two storey bay, a balcony projecting off to the side of it, and the central recess. This breaking up of the bulk would be further enhanced by a sensitive use of materials, with the walls being primarily white render but interrupted by sections of timber cladding, as well as metal railings enclosing the balconies. The roof would be finished with plain tiles to match surrounding properties and this would also be broken up but this time by the dormers, which would be cladded with zinc.
- 7.15. In contrast, the faces of the building which would not address the street would be relatively featureless, with the two storey addition representing a 10m long continuation of the existing, relatively blank rear elevation. However, any visual harm that this might cause in itself, especially considering that views of this part of the building would be limited, would be outweighed by the existing parts of the building being finished with white render to match the addition, thereby significantly improving its overall appearance.
- 7.16. Overall, it is considered that despite adding considerable bulk to the existing building, the proposals would represent a significant visual improvement to what is currently a building of little architectural merit. While there can be little doubt that the design incorporates some unusual features, these owe largely to the irregularity of the existing building and on balance, it is considered that the design responds positively to surrounding development. Having regard to this, it is considered that the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area would be acceptable.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- 7.17. Policy 7.6 of the London Plan requires that buildings and structures should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy and overshadowing.
- 7.18. Policy DM D2 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan states that proposals must be designed to ensure that they would not have an undue negative impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, quality of living conditions, privacy, visual intrusion or noise.
- 7.19. The only properties immediately surrounding the application site lie to the east on Hatherleigh Close. These are two storey dwellings laid out in terraces of four units in

length, whose back gardens would adjoin the site if not for an intervening access track which is approximately 3m wide.

- 7.20. It is acknowledged that the existing building results in a strong sense of enclosure when in the rear gardens of these properties, despite the fact that the distance from their rear wall to the building is 20m. The proposals would exacerbate this effect, lengthening the existing visible section of wall from approximately 14m to 24m and increasing the height of the building along this length by 2.4m. However, officers must give some weight to the fact that the building would not be set right up to the boundaries of these properties, instead being located some 4.5m away at the closest point (including the width of the access track). It is further noted that the addition, due to being offset from the existing northern face of the building, would be set a further metre away. In light of this, it is considered that only limited harm can be attached to any additional sense of enclosure that may result from the development and officers do not consider that the development could reasonably be resisted on this basis alone.
- 7.21. In respect of loss of light, the applicant has submitted a detailed daylight impact study in support of the proposals, which was carried out in accordance with the British Research Establishment's Daylight and Sunlight Planning Guide (2011). The study considered a worst case scenario which did not take into account existing vegetation on or around the site, meaning that all of the modelled effects would be attributable solely to the proposed additions. It showed that the levels of sunlight reaching the windows on the rear elevations of the properties on Hatherleigh Close would, at the very worst, reduce by 12% under the proposals but in most cases, would reduce negligibly (less than 5%). A similarly small effect was modelled for the number of annual sunlight hours received by the gardens of these properties. Having regard to this, it is considered that the effect of the proposals on loss of light would be acceptable.
- 7.22. In respect of loss of privacy, the only new window at first floor level or above in the rear elevation (looking east) would be obscurely glazed and fixed shut up to 1.7m above finished floor level. The remaining new windows would all look out over Links Avenue to the front of the property. In light of this, it is considered that the effect of the development on privacy would be acceptable.

Standard of Accommodation

- 7.23. Policy 3.5 of the London Plan states that the design of all new housing developments should enhance the quality of local places, taking into account physical context; local character; density; tenure and land use mix; and relationships with, and provision of, public, communal and open spaces, taking particular account of the needs of children, disabled and older people.
- 7.24. Policy DM D2 of the Merton Sites and Policies Plan 2014 states that developments should ensure appropriate provision of outdoor amenity space, whether public, private or communal, which accords with the appropriate minimum standards and is compatible with the character of surrounding areas.
- 7.25. The Mayor's Housing SPG 2016 provides guidance on the implementation of housing policies in the London Plan. It outlines the design standards for meeting the provisions

of policy 3.5 of the London Plan – they represent the minimum level of quality and design that new homes should meet.

- 7.26. Standard 26 of the Mayor’s Housing SPG states that a minimum of 5m² of private outdoor space should be provided for 1-2 person dwellings and an extra 1m² should be provided for each additional occupant. This standard is the “appropriate minimum standard” used for the purposes of policy DM D2.
- 7.27. Standard 29 of the Mayor’s Housing SPG states that developments should minimise the number of single aspect dwellings. Single aspect dwellings that are north facing, or exposed to noise levels above which significant adverse effects on health and quality of life occur, or which contain three or more bedrooms should be avoided.
- 7.28. The proposed new dwelling and the enlarged existing units would all comply with the requirements of the Technical Housing Standards. The new dwelling, which would be suitable for family occupation, would have a private garden measuring 55m², which is in excess of the policy requirement. Three of the existing units would also be afforded private outdoor space, with the two ground floor units allocated gardens and one of the upper floors units allocated the balcony within the recess at the front of the building. At present, all of the existing units share a communal garden which appears to be seldom used and is in poor condition.
- 7.29. It is considered that this represents a good standard of internal and external accommodation for potential future occupants of the site, albeit one of the first floor units would remain without any private outdoor space. Given that this unit would not be suitable for family occupation, this is considered to be an acceptable situation.

Transport and Parking

- 7.30. Policy 6.3 of the London Plan, Policy CS 20 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM T2 of the SPP require that development would not adversely affect pedestrian or cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents, on street parking or traffic management.
- 7.31. Policy 6.13 of the London Plan and Policy DM T3 of the SPP set out maximum car parking standards for new development. These policies seek to strike a balance between promoting new development and prevent excessive car parking which can undermine the use of more sustainable modes of transport. Twenty percent of all car parking spaces should provide for electric vehicle charging points.
- 7.32. Cycle storage is required for new housing developments by Policy 6.9 of the London Plan and Policy CS 18 of the Core Strategy; it should be secure, sheltered and adequately lit. One space should be provided per one bedroom dwelling and two spaces should be provided for all others.
- 7.33. The existing building benefits from four off-street car parking spaces located at the very northern extent of the site, which would be retained under the proposals. Given the excellent public transport accessibility in this location, officers are satisfied that the existing level of parking provision is sufficient to accommodate one additional unit as proposed. It is recommended that a condition be attached to any permission requiring

retention of the parking area as existing and a legal agreement be entered into exempting future occupants of the new unit from applying for parking permits. Subject to entering into such an agreement, the imposition of this condition and a further condition requiring a construction transport management plan, officers are satisfied that the proposals would have an acceptable impact on the safety and operation of the highway network.

- 7.34. The proposals show space within the site dedicated to cycle storage and officers are satisfied that this is of an acceptable size. It is recommended that technical details of cycle storage facilities are required by a condition attached to any permission.

Waste and Recycling

- 7.35. Policy CS 17 of the Core Strategy requires well designed, integrated waste storage facilities for all new development. This is reinforced by Standards 22 and 23 of the London Plan Housing SPG.

- 7.36. The Council's waste officer has assessed the proposed waste and recycling facilities and is satisfied that they would be of an acceptable standard. It is recommended that a condition is attached to any permission requiring technical details of these facilities to be approved prior to occupation of the development.

Sustainability

- 7.37. Policy 5.3 of the London Plan and Policy CS 15 of the Core Strategy seek to ensure the highest standards of sustainability are achieved for developments which includes minimising carbon dioxide emissions, maximising recycling, sourcing materials with a low carbon footprint, ensuring urban greening and minimising the usage of resources such as water.

- 7.38. The applicant has confirmed that the new dwelling and the altered first floor flats would achieve a 19% improvement in CO2 emissions over and above the requirements of Part L of the Building Regulations and wholesome water consumption rates of less than 105L per person per day. It is recommended that a condition be attached to any permission to demonstrate this prior to occupation of the development.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. The proposals would result in the creation of an additional family-sized unit and the enhancement of four existing smaller units. The design would respond reasonably well to surrounding development and given the poor condition of the existing building, it is considered that it would result in an overall improvement to the character and appearance of the area.

- 8.2. While the proposals would result in the worsening of an existing sense of enclosure to the occupiers of properties on Hatherleigh Close, it is considered that this limited harm is outweighed by the benefits in providing an additional high quality unit and improving four others.

- 8.3. There are no other material considerations which indicate that permission should be refused. Therefore, it is recommended to grant planning permission subject to a suitably worded legal agreement and conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant planning permission subject to a legal agreement and conditions as below:

S106 Heads of Terms:

1. That future occupants of the new dwelling are exempt from applying for parking permits.
2. To meet the Council's costs in preparing the S106.
3. To meet the Council's costs in monitoring the S106.

Conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be commenced not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3440LA-PP1-01; 3440LA-PP1-02; 3440LA-PP1-03; 3440LA-PP1-04 Rev B; and 3440LA-PP1-05 Rev C.
3. No development above ground level shall take place until details of particulars and samples of the materials to be used on all external faces of the development hereby permitted, including window frames and doors (notwithstanding any materials specified in the application form and/or the approved drawings), have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved details.
4. No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme for the storage of refuse and recycling has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the approved scheme has been implemented in full and the facilities and/or measures contained within the approved scheme shall thereafter be retained for use at all times.
5. The vehicle parking area shown on the approved plans shall be provided prior to occupation of the buildings or use hereby permitted and shall be retained for parking purposes for occupiers and users of the development and for no other purpose.
6. No development above ground level shall take place until details of secure cycle parking facilities for the occupants of, and visitors to, the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be fully implemented and made available for use prior to the first occupation of the development and thereafter retained for use at all times.

7. The development shall not commence until details of hours of working and the provision to accommodate all site workers', visitors' and construction vehicles and loading/unloading arrangements during the construction process have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details must be implemented and complied with for the duration of the construction process.
 8. Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, the new window at first floor level in the eastern elevation shall be glazed with obscure glass and fixed shut to a height of 1.7m above finished floor level and shall permanently maintained as such thereafter.
 9. The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until evidence has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority confirming that the new semi-detached dwelling and altered first floor flats have achieved CO2 reductions of not less than a 19% improvement on Part L regulations 2013, and internal water consumption rates of no greater than 105 litres per person per day.
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[Click here](#) for full plans and documents related to this application.