

We need your support

The Avenue Nursing Home Major Enlargement – 2nd Application

Introduction

In April 2006 we asked members to support our objection to a proposal for a massive expansion to The Avenue Nursing Home at 32 The Avenue, Cheam. Following that campaign, which resulted in over 110 residents sending letters of objection to the council, the application was withdrawn by the owner without ever being decided.

Since then we have had a continual battle with the Home over various parts of that application which have been implemented without the owner first obtaining any planning permission. The most significant of these was an unauthorised first floor rear extension. A retrospective application to regularise this work was submitted and promptly refused by the council. The owner then appealed. The government inspector agreed with the council's decision and dismissed the appeal.

The owner has been instructed to re-instate the building, but instead he has submitted a major new application.

Latest application summary

This latest application (Ref: A2007/57129) proposes:

“Alterations and extensions to existing Nursing home comprising a part one, part two, part three storey side and rear extension, staircase link to new basement accommodation, increase in height and amendment of existing roofline involving alterations of two existing dormer windows and provision of a new dormer window at front, two dormer windows at rear, two dormer window facing right and left side elevations two 2-storey bay extensions at side, provision of a first floor extension with gable roof and porch canopy at front, fire escape enclosure at side and alterations to elevations together with six car parking spaces at front.”

Rather than reducing the size of the proposed building, this application is larger than the withdrawn April 2006 application due to the:

- first floor being extended to reflect additional rooms created by the unauthorised development (see above)
- inclusion of 6 massive gables in the roofline to greatly increase the volume of the second floor accommodation.

From the application we see that it proposes:

Rooms: 30 bedrooms (currently 18); a 66% increase.

Footprint: 50% larger than the current building including the single storey extensions (over twice the footprint of the original house).

Total Floor Area: 2¼ times larger than the current building.

Roof Ridge Height: Main building approx 1m higher, side extension approx 2m higher.

Back Garden: depth halved to only 8m.



Residents' Association Position:

As with the last application, we endorse the intentions of the owner to make long-overdue improvements to the existing facilities and we understand that significant changes need to be made for the home to meet current standards. Many internal changes have already been carried out that make the home a much more pleasant place for the residents.

However, this application goes far beyond what is needed to ensure the comfort of the residents and, in our view, is designed to extract the maximum profit from the site. Extensions to care homes are subject to the same controls as ordinary houses and must remain in keeping with the neighbourhood. The general view of our members is that the scale of the proposed extensions is far too large for the area and for this site in particular.

A three-storey building of the size and capacity proposed will be completely out of character with the surrounding area, and, if allowed, **would set a precedent for several of the other Care/Nursing homes** in the area to seek similar expansion. Even worse, existing houses could be acquired for conversion into Care or Nursing Homes and equally massive extensions added.

We have numerous detailed objections based on planning policies, but **our fundamental view is that any development on this site of the magnitude proposed must be vigorously opposed.**

This would set a precedent - It's too big.

<p>99 Your Road Cheam, SM2 7XX 9th March 2007</p>	<p>David Hannam Planning and Transportation Division London Borough of Sutton 24 Denmark Road Carshalton Surrey SM5 2JG</p> <p>Dear Mr Hannam</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Re : Planning Application A2007/57129 – The Avenue Nursing Home</p> <p>I am writing to strongly object to the planning application A2007/57129 which has been submitted for extensions to The Avenue Nursing Home at 32 The Avenue, Cheam. My reasons for objecting are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The proposed building is massive when viewed from all angles. Its bulk would dominate the neighbouring residential properties and it has the impression of being either an institution or a large block of flats.b) The overall depth of the proposed building would be over twice that of the original house, and the resulting floor area will be over twice that of the current building (including its various ground floor extensions).c) The proposal represents a major over-development of the plot, to the extent that the already encroached back garden area is further reduced by a half. We are not impressed by the owner's argument that the residents do not need a large amount of amenity space. They deserve more than a fence to look out at. But more significantly, the home is in the South Cheam Special Policy Area which is intended to have "attractive openness" and filling the plot with a building of this size would not meet with this criteria.d) South Cheam already has more than its fair share of care home beds. The neighbourhood neither wants nor needs massive care homes created in the heart of this quiet residential area.e) The rear extension would both overlook and over-shadow the house to the north and the bungalow to the west. It will also dominate the view from the south, this being particularly visible as it is on a major through route and immediately faces the main entrance into St Andrew's Church.f) The available off street car parking is very limited. What is proposed has been squeezed into the front garden making it look like a commercial car park and would be quite out of keeping with the area. In my view, the number of spaces proposed are quite inadequate for the staff and visitors to a 30 room home. In practice, cars would not use this diminutive parking area and would park in the road near to the dangerous adjacent junction.g) Furthermore, because the swing round drive would be removed, cars would have to reverse into the road at a point which is very close to the busy junction with Northey Avenue.h) A 66% increase in bedrooms will undoubtedly give rise to more noise and disturbance caused by delivery and collections, to the ongoing distress of the neighbours, often, I understand, at very unsocial hours. <p>For these reasons I ask that you refuse this application.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p><Your name></p>
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Sample letter

Put simply, it is just too big.

What we want you to do

Please write to the Council, objecting to this proposal quoting planning reference A2007/57129. The address to write to is:

David Hannam, Planning and Transportation Division, London Borough of Sutton,
24 Denmark Road, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 2JG

You can either post your letter or email it to developmentcontrol@sutton.gov.uk (if you send your letter by email you MUST make sure your postal address is shown clearly).

Make sure that your letter arrives by 26th March at the latest.

An example of the type of letter you could send is as shown above. Use this as a basis, but please put your objections into your own words rather than just copying out the example. **If you wrote before**, you must write again, quoting the new reference number. You can use your previous letter and add that the new application does nothing to lessen your concerns (remember to change the planning reference number).

Please send a copy of your letter to our local co-ordinator, Roger Stafford:

47 The Avenue, Cheam, SM2 7QA; 020 8642 4736; or by email: rogerstafford99@yahoo.co.uk

Thank you for your support – remember, **this could happen to a house near you!**

If you want to be kept up to date with progress, send your email address to peter.mattey@bscra.com