

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2017

by C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 10 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/16/3163527
50 Springfield Road, Crawley, RH11 8AH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Kathy Southall against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2016/0654/FUL, dated 26 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 4 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing rear conservatory and replacement with new rear and side single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on, firstly, the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and, secondly, the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

Living conditions

3. The proposal would see the existing house extended from both the main rear elevation and the rear closet wing, to provide a new addition that would be the full width of the house, and would also project to the side. Along the boundary with the adjoining property of 48 Springfield Road the rearward extent of the proposal at No. 50 would be around 9.3m from the rear elevation, though there would be an open courtyard immediately to the rear of the main elevation of No. 50 that adjoins No. 50's existing rear addition.
 4. The application was modified during the course of determination by the Council to show the extension having a height of 2.4m along the boundary with No. 48. Whilst I acknowledge this would have less of an impact upon No. 48 than the originally submitted plans, I share the concerns of the Council regarding the submission. It is the considerable depth of the rear extension, when combined with the height, that would lead to the impression of an overbearing effect on the outlook from No. 48. I viewed the appeal site from that property and the proposed extension of such a length and height along the boundary would be intrusive and oppressive to the outlook from No. 48 and its garden. In my
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judgement this would be a greater impact than the current situation which exists with the current boundary and trellis.

5. The Council have referred to their 2001 approved Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 5 (SPG), which states that on semi-detached properties a projection beyond 3.3m is not usually acceptable. I accept that such a figure is guidance, not necessarily to be taken as a rigid or determinative figure, and that circumstances may mean different considerations apply. But on the basis of what I observed at my site visit I am satisfied in this instance that the degree of projection beyond this guideline figure would be sufficient to lead to material harm to the living conditions of adjoining occupiers.
6. The proposed side extension would be set 1.16m from the boundary of 52a Springfield Road, and be 3m high. There would be some effect upon the outlook from the rear of the adjoining property, though this would be balanced to a degree by the removal of the garage on the boundary.
7. The appellant states that the proposed extension would be similar to what might be achieved through the exercise of permitted development rights, through the prior approval process. However, as the Council point out, this can allow for up to 6m from the original rear wall of the property which is less than the current proposals. The Council also point out that such a scheme would be subject to procedures which allow for amenity considerations to be taken into account. Thus, without formal confirmation that an extension of the same dimensions as currently proposed could be achieved under permitted development rights, I give little weight to this submission.
8. On the first issue, the proposed development would be notably harmful to the living conditions of 48 Springfield Road and to a lesser extent at No. 52a, and therefore be contrary to Policies CH2 and CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, whose general objective is to seek to ensure new development is both of a good standard of urban design and retains a good standard of amenity for existing occupants. There would also be conflict with the SPG that sets out a design principle to not dominate a neighbour's property or garden.

Character and appearance

9. A further consideration raised by the Council's decision notice is the design of the proposed extension. The amendment to the design that was considered by the Council – undertaken in order to address the residential amenity issue – has created a scheme that appears rather contrived in design and form. No. 50 and the attached semi-detached property of No. 48 have a formality in their appearance due to the traditional Victorian proportions.
10. I accept that modern design can be an appropriate approach to extending or altering such properties, but the scheme in front of me appears rather contrived in appearance, as a result of being amenity-led rather than design-led. The width and design of the extension, when combined with the modified roofline to the extension, is not sympathetic to the host property or the wider area. I therefore agree with the Council that the extension would be an inappropriate extension to the house, and so harmful to the appearance of the

building and wider area. This would conflict with Policies CH2 and CH3 of the Local Plan and the SPG.

Conclusions

11. The proposed development would be contrary to the policies of the adopted Local Plan and the Council's guidance for residential extension. For these reasons the appeal is dismissed.

C J Leigh
INSPECTOR