

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2017

by J A B Gresty MA MRICS

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

Decision date: 17 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/16/3167778

26 Byron Road, Selsdon, South Croydon CR2 8DY

- 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 Patricia Underwood against the decision of the Council for the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 16/03482/P, dated 5 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is change of Hip Roof design to a Gable End including a loft "set back Dormer" on the rear elevation in compliance with Planning regulation.
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Application for Costs

1. An application for costs was made by Patricia Ruth Underwood against the Council for the London Borough of Croydon. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached, two-storey house. It is situated in a predominantly residential area and this part of Byron Road is characterised by similar style semi-detached houses, set back from the road behind front gardens and driveways. In the main there is significant space between the pairs of houses at first floor level and most of the houses retain a hipped roof design. The layout of the houses and their hipped roofs combine to contribute towards the residential development on Byron Road having an attractive, spacious, planned character and appearance.
 5. The appeal proposal includes a roof extension to provide second floor accommodation. The extension would include construction of a gable end wall in place of a hipped roof. At the time of inspection the gable end wall was largely complete and it stood out very prominently in the street scene as an alien
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feature which was out of keeping with the prevailing pattern of development on this part of Byron Road.

6. In addition to the gable end extension, the development would include a substantial dormer on the rear elevation of the extended roof. The dormer would have a very shallow mono-pitched roof and would span more than half the width of the extended property's rear roof elevation. The top of the dormer would be set just below the ridge of the main roof and its rear elevation would be in line with the main back wall of the house below. As a consequence of its size and box-like design, the dormer would appear unduly large and bulky in relation to the main house roof and the host property as a whole. Overall, it would dominate the appearance of the rear elevation of the appeal property, detracting significantly from the character and appearance of the pair of semi-detached houses when viewed from the properties' back gardens and other nearby properties to the rear.
7. Whilst at the time of inspection the dormer had been partly built with its side wall a continuation of the new gable end wall, the application drawings indicate that the side wall of the dormer would be set back a short distance from the gable end. However, even when set back as proposed, the bulk of the side of the dormer would be visible from the road, adding to the visible bulk of the extended gable ended roof. The combination of the gable end and the dormer would result in the extended roof being a very prominent, bulky and incongruous feature which would dominate the appearance of the appeal property when viewed from the road. Further, the development would reduce the symmetry of the front view of the pair of houses significantly which would emphasise the unsympathetic nature of the development.
8. Overall, the proposed development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property, the pair of houses and this part of Byron Road. In these respects the development would fail to meet the requirements of Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan, Policies SP1.2 and SP1.4 of the Croydon Local Plan and Saved Policies UD2 and UD3 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development. Further the development would not meet with the aims of the Croydon Council Supplementary Planning Document No. 2 Residential Extensions and Alterations which in particular seeks roof extensions which do not dominate the original building as the proposed development would do.
9. The appeal proposal includes installation of two roof lights in the front elevation of the roof extension. During my inspection I saw very few roof lights on the front elevations of the houses on Byron Road. The roof lights as indicated on the application drawings would not contribute positively to the appearance of the appeal property but, due to their relatively small size, would not be reason alone to dismiss the appeal.
10. The semi-detached house at 31 Byron Road has recently had a gable ended first floor extension built which would have resulted in loss in part of the property's hipped roof. However, the adjoining house has a similar gable ended first floor extension. Consequently the extended pair of houses has degree of symmetry which complements the prevailing pattern symmetrical pairs of semi-detached houses on Byron Road. Also, No 31's flat-roof, first-floor rear extension is not nearly as prominent in the street scene as the second floor dormer which forms

part of the appeal scheme would be. Therefore, whilst the gable ended extension to No 31 does not reflect the pattern of hipped roofed development on Byron Road, the development is not directly comparable to the appeal scheme. Further, each case must be considered on its own merits and the existence of some gable ended extensions to properties in the local area does not provide justification for new development which would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area.

Conclusion

11. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. In this case the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and local area. Accordingly the development would not represent sustainable development as sought by the Framework and, for the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J A B Gresty

INSPECTOR