

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 August 2017

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/ Q3820/D/17/3175452
59 Green Lane, Crawley, RH10 8JX

- 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 Ms Samina Iqbal against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2017/0158/FUL, dated 21 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed first and second storey extension including 4 dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The first main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the host building, the row of dwellings and the surrounding area. The second main issue is the effect of the scheme on the living conditions of the occupiers of 61 Green Lane (No.61), with particular regard to visual impact and privacy.

Reasons

Character

3. The north side of Green Lane is primarily characterised by a groups of uniformly designed dwellings of various ages, interspersed by occasional bungalows. The Appeal dwelling is located within a row of three pairs of uniformly designed modest sized semi-detached pre-war cottages. The dwellings have uncluttered front elevations and simple fully hipped roofs.
 4. The Appeal dwelling has a single storey flat roofed rear and side extension which also projects to the front of the dwelling. Whilst large and utilitarian in design, due to its modest height and form the existing extension does not have a significant impact on the appearance and uniformity of the row of dwellings.
 5. Together and amongst other things policies CH2 and CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan (2015-2030) (Local Plan) seek to ensure that new development reinforces locally distinctive patterns of development. New
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development should be based on a thorough understanding of the significance and distinctiveness of the site and its immediate and wider setting. At the same time it should not result in unreasonable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings. Consistent with this the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that new development should respond to local character, reflect the identity of local surroundings and add to the quality of the area. A good standard of amenity should be provided for all residents.

6. The Council's Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016) (SPD) advises that extensions should relate appropriately to the host dwelling and the neighbourhood. Care needs to be taken when designing side extensions. This is because they can have a terracing effect which can change the character of the street scene and their flank walls can affect the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent dwelling. Dormer windows can also affect the character of a dwelling and generally are not normally allowed on front roof slopes for this reason.
7. The proposed extension would follow the front and rear building lines of the original dwelling and would project close to the side boundary of the property. Whilst the resultant roof would be hipped it would have gable roofed dormer windows in its front, side and rear roof slopes. This would materially add to the bulk of the roof of the dwelling and would appear top heavy and awkward. The resultant roof would unbalance the pair of dwellings and undermine the uniformity of the row of dwellings. The situation would be exacerbated by the width of the extension and its close proximity to the boundary with No.61. The relationship between the two dwellings would be unduly cramped and it would detract from the separate identity of the row of cottages.
8. This harm could not be satisfactorily addressed through the imposition of conditions and would outweigh the benefits for the appellant that would result from the additional living accommodation.
9. For these reasons I conclude on the first main issue that the proposed extension would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host building, the row of dwellings and the surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with policies CH2 and CH3 of the Local Plan, the SPD and the NPPF.

Living conditions

10. The proposed extension would project close up to the boundary with No.61 and would project some 12 metres beyond the rear building line of the dwelling at No.61. As a consequence it would totally dominate the outlook from the rear facing windows and rear garden of that property. It would result in an oppressive sense of enclosure, which would be exacerbated by the associated loss of sunlight during the late afternoon and early evening.
11. It is noted that the proposed upper floor side facing windows could have restricted opening and be obscure glazed. However, due to their combined number, size and proximity they would result in a perceived loss of privacy, which would add to the visually overbearing impact of the proposed extension.

12. Whilst it is acknowledged that the current occupiers of No.61 have not objected to the proposal, this does not obviate the harm it would cause to their and any future occupiers living conditions.
13. The proposed extension would not be visually overbearing or result in a material loss of privacy or sunlight for the occupiers of the dwellings to the north, south and west. This is due to the position of the proposed extension and its distance from those dwellings.
14. I conclude that the proposed extension would unacceptably harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No.61 due to its overbearing visual impact. Accordingly it would conflict with policy CH3 of the Local Plan, the SPD and the NPPF.

Conclusion

15. The conclusions on both main issues represent compelling reasons for dismissing this Appeal.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR