
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2017

by Clive Tokley MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/17/3183932
41 Watlings Close, Croydon, CR0 7XQ

- 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 Grace Pink against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 17/02841/HSE, dated 4 June 2017, was refused by notice dated 21st July 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as "existing single storey side extension to be made into a double storey side extension".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the existing single storey side extension to be made into a double storey side extension at 41 Watlings Close, Croydon, CR0 7XQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 17/02841/HSE, dated 4 June 2017 subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: - 1706/001, 1706/002, 1706/101, 1706/102 and 1706/103.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and its effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 12 Aldersmead Avenue as regards outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is within a modern housing development at the end of a terrace of three dwellings in a short spur off Watlings Close. The front wall of No 41 is set forward of the other two houses and this is expressed at roof level by a forward-projecting gable.

4. The proposed extension would continue the main roof line of the terrace and its design and finishes would match the terrace. When viewed through the narrow angle from Watlings Close to the south east the extension would be mostly screened by the forward projection of No 41. The full elevation would be seen from immediately outside No 41 but this part of the cul-de-sac would normally only be used to access that dwelling.
5. The Council's 2006 *Supplementary Planning Document 2 'Residential Extensions and Alterations* (SPD2) indicates that the original integrity of the design of the dwelling should normally be maintained and that this can usually be achieved by setting extensions back so that they become subordinate elements in the street scene. SPD2 indicates that in some circumstances the degree of setback can be reduced and illustrates this by a photograph of an extension that continues both the roof planes and front wall of the host dwelling.
6. In the appeal proposal the scale and design of the extension would not be subordinate to the host dwelling. However as a result of the continuation of the roof planes and the set back of the front wall it would read as part of the original terrace. I consider that the extension would not detract from the appearance of the terrace and would be more in keeping with its character than the existing lean-to structure at the side of No 41. I consider that the integrity of the design of the terrace would be retained and that the extension would not detract from the character or appearance of the area. In the particular circumstances of this proposal, it would not conflict with SPD2 or with saved Policy UD3 of the *Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006* (UDP).

Living conditions

7. No 12 Aldersmead Avenue is an extended semi-detached house whose rear wall is at right angles to the flank wall of the appeal dwelling. No 12 has large rear-facing glazed doors and windows and is built at a lower level than the appeal dwelling.
8. The rear windows of No 12 have an outlook towards the gabled flank wall and the lean-to roof of the single-storey extension of the appeal dwelling. The glazed doors on the ground floor of No 12 are positioned close to the boundary with its semi-detached partner. In this position they have an outlook above the fence to the rear of the back wall of the appeal property. The proposal would result in the flank wall of No 41 being closer to the rear windows of No 12 thereby increasing its apparent height when seen from within that dwelling; nevertheless the occupiers of that dwelling would retain a more open outlook to the rear of the extension and I consider that the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the outlook from the rear windows.
9. The perceived additional height of the flank wall would also be apparent from the rear garden of 12 Aldersmead Avenue; however it would be off-set from the boundary. I consider that in this position it would not be excessively over-dominant when seen from the rear garden.
10. On this issue I consider that the proposal would not have an unacceptable overbearing effect on the occupiers of No 12 Aldersmead Avenue and that it would not conflict with the SPD2 guidance or saved UDP Policy UD8 or Policy 7.6 of the London Plan.

Other matters

11. The officer report indicates that an identical application was refused in 1998 and that it was the subject of an appeal dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Council indicates that the appellant has not addressed the principle of the massing sufficiently to overturn that decision. However I have not seen that decision and it pre-dates both the UDP and SPD2. I have no details of the reasoning underlying the decision and I can therefore give it no weight.
12. The appellant refers to extensions at No 33 Mardell Road but those proposals and their context have little in common with the appeal proposal and they have not influenced my decision in this appeal.

Conditions

13. I have imposed the usual conditions governing commencement and identifying the approved drawings. In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance a condition is imposed requiring that external materials match the existing house.

Conclusion

14. Taking account of all matters I have concluded that the proposal would not be harmful to the character or appearance of the area and would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 12 Aldersmead Avenue as regards outlook. I therefore conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Clive Tokley

INSPECTOR