
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 June 2020

by Martin Small, BA (Hons), BPI, DipCM, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/20/3246668

54 Warnham Road, Furnace Green, Crawley, RH10 6QS

- 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 Mr Gavin Taylor against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: CR/2019/0898/FUL dated 11 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is a front porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and on the street scene.

Reasons

3. Furnace Green is a neighbourhood created as part of Crawley New Town. From the evidence before me, the dwellings in Warnham Road are characteristic of early New Town development in the neighbourhood. The locality of the appeal property has a strong character due to its layout and the general homogeneity of architectural style.
4. Dwellings in the locality of the appeal property are predominantly of a relatively plain, simple design with little detailing on the front elevations save for areas of cladding and simple flat-roofed canopies over the front door or small plain enclosed porches of wood or plastic and glass. I observed during my site visit that the substantial majority of the cladding and porches is finished in white. Between the areas of cladding, the front elevations of the dwellings are finished with a grey render, with brickwork being confined to the side elevations. Roofs are tiled, with gable ends.
5. The host dwelling is the end property on a terrace of 5 dwellings. It is characteristic of the area with a flat-roofed canopy over the front door. The proposed development would be an enclosed front porch of brick walls with UPvc windows and a pitched and hipped tiled roof. It would be a substantial structure, extending virtually the full width of the front elevation.
6. The proposed hipped roof and the use of brick on the front elevation would not reflect the host dwelling or other dwellings in the area. The size, design and materials of the proposed porch would thus be at odds with the simplicity of

the front elevation of the host dwelling and the prevailing character and appearance of the front elevations of the other dwellings in the terrace and elsewhere in the locality. Being on the front elevation the porch would be prominent. It would therefore be an incongruous feature that would detract from the character and appearance of the host dwelling and from the street scene.

7. I acknowledge that there are existing enclosed brick porches on some other dwellings in the area. The appellant draws my attention to a number of these although, with one exception, does not identify where these are, and I observed some during my site visit. However, not all of the examples provided are of the same size, design and materials as the proposal before me.
8. Furthermore, from my observations, these existing brick porches were not so numerous as to be a characteristic of the area and appeared rather as incongruous features in the street scene. The majority of the other porches that I observed were smaller and plainer, such as those on Nos 56 and 62, other properties in the same terrace as the appeal property.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed porch would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and to the street scene. It would therefore conflict in this respect with Policies CH2 and CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 (2015). In combination these policies set out that development, amongst other things, should respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development and respond sympathetically to their surroundings.
10. The proposal would also fail to accord in this respect with the guidance in the Council's Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016) on front porches that they should be in keeping with the character of the area and property. Furthermore, the proposal would conflict with paragraph 127 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires planning decisions to ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history.

Other Matters

11. I understand the appellant's feeling of unfairness given the existence of other brick porches in the area. However, it is for me to determine the proposal before me and I have concluded that it would be unacceptable for the reasons given above. This conclusion is not outweighed by the Council's granting of planning permission for porches on other properties. Neither is the larger approved porch at 58 Ashburnham Road to which the appellant refers sufficient a precedent to justify the proposal before me as each case should be considered on its own merits.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and having regard to the other matter raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Small

INSPECTOR