
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2021

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 April 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/20/3259333

18A Beech House Road, Croydon, London CR0 1JP

- 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 Isabelle Rigal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 20/01711/FUL, dated 17 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "roof terrace and all associated works".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - (i) whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Chatsworth Road Conservation Area; and
 - (ii) the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring properties, with particular regard to privacy.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a second floor, roof level flat with dormer windows to the rear and a single window within the gable at the front. It is located within the Chatsworth Road Conservation Area and forms part of a group of 3 pairs of handsome semi-detached red brick properties. The pairs are symmetrically arranged at both the front and rear and, by virtue of their unity and quality of design, they make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
4. The proposal would include the formation of a roof terrace on an area of flat roof at the rear of the appeal property which would be enclosed on two sides by tall black painted screens. The terrace would be accessed via a doorway installed in the position of the existing dormer window.
5. Due to their elevated position these elements would be evident from surrounding gardens and would be alien and incongruous features in the

context of the largely unaltered roofscape of nearby properties. This would result in harm to the appearance of No.18, it would unbalance the symmetry of the pair it forms part of and disrupt the unity of the group.

6. For these reasons the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Chatsworth Road Conservation Area. It is therefore contrary to Policies SP4, DM10 and DM18 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) which, amongst other matters, require development to respect the pattern, scale and massing of the surrounding area and preserve or enhance heritage assets.
7. The proposal would also include the installation of a pair of rooflights within the rear roofslope. As planning permission has already been granted for these elements (Ref: 19/05660/FUL) this is not a matter requiring consideration as part of this appeal.

Living conditions

8. Although the proposed 1.7m tall privacy screens would limit overlooking from those parts of the terrace closest to the flat, there would be clear views into the gardens of both the ground floor flat at No.18 and No.16 from the edge of the terrace. This would lead to far greater levels of overlooking than are presently the case via the dormer windows and therefore a significant loss of privacy for the occupiers of these neighbouring properties.
9. I therefore conclude on this matter that, due to its siting and elevated position, the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. This is contrary to Policies SP4.2 and DM10.6 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) which, amongst other matters, require development proposals to ensure that the amenity of the occupants of adjoining buildings is protected.

Other Matters

10. The development plan recognises that outdoor space is beneficial to health and well-being and requires its provision for new build development. However, where proposals involve the addition of private amenity space to existing dwellings, the benefits of such provision need to be weighed against the impacts on neighbours' living conditions and the appearance of the area. In this case the benefits would be outweighed by the impacts.
11. Reference has been made to a roof terrace at 8 Beach House Road, which is similar to the appeal proposal. As there is no evidence before me that this terrace was granted planning permission in the recent past, I attribute limited weight to it. Similarly, I attribute limited weight to terraces added to properties elsewhere in the Conservation Area, as their particular context would differ from that at the appeal site.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole INSPECTOR