

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 August 2021

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/21/3269240

32 The Woodfield's , South Croydon, CR2 0HE

- 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 John Pearson against the decision of London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 20/06072/HSE, dated 23 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion to form habitable room.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is an attractive semi-detached building with interesting elevations and roof forms generally in symmetry with the adjoining dwelling. It lies in a neighbourhood which is of established residential suburban character where well-designed homes, usually with main elevations intact, along with their gardens come together to form an area of attractive appearance. The proposal is as described above and is effectively a large side dormer of some 8.8 metres width and 3.4m depth.
 4. To my mind the proposed side dormer, which would be seen in conjunction with, and on top of, a side roofscape which almost has the appearance of an existing side dormer, would be very ill-at-ease visually. It would appear dominant and ungainly because of its shape, size, siting and height to the ridge, and there would be visibility of this in part of the streetscene. A very pleasing aspect found locally and most notably with the appeal property and its partner is one of symmetry; this scheme would completely unbalance the pairing. The development would simply not echo the type of extension works one would expect in a good quality and generally traditional suburban setting. It would not be in character and would be 'top heavy' with a jarring in appearance.
 5. For these reasons I conclude that the proposal would run contrary to Policies SP4 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 and Croydon's Suburban Design
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Guide SPD 2019 (SPD). It would also conflict with the 2021 London Plan's Policy D4: *Delivering good design* which replaces, in a similar vein, the now superseded Policies 7.4 and 7.6 cited by the Council. The forgoing policies and SPD all aim to ensure that new development is well designed and aesthetically appropriate.

Other matters

6. I do sympathise with the Appellant's wish to extend to better accommodate family and working from home and I hope a satisfactory solution can be found. I recognise the changes which are to occur locally, most notably in relation to the redevelopment at No 28. I do not know the full background to that case on its exceptionally large site but in any event whilst leading to some local change in character I do not see it as negating the need for good design at the appeal property or my dealing with this appeal scheme on its own merits.
7. Notwithstanding the Appellant's case, the SPD is guidance only and a strictly mathematical approach to suggested measurements for dormers, in any event usually found on rear elevations, would not always translate to a satisfactory situation on the ground. I can see that the Appellant has carefully considered external materials. I appreciate that neighbours did not object. I also note other examples of roof changes drawn to my attention although I found none to be directly comparable by reason of location, host property, scale or design and, as I say above, I must determine this case on its own merits.
8. On the question of possible 'permitted development' it is not my remit to determine on that matter; a planning application was submitted and I have to determine the appeal into that following the Council's refusal of planning permission.
9. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.
10. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered. Key objectives of the document are to safeguard qualities of the built environment and the development plan policies and guidance to which I refer mirror this.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR