

---

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 December 2021

**by H Lock BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 16 December 2021**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/21/3278095**

**33 West Green Drive, West Green, CRAWLEY, RH11 7EL**

- 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 & Mrs Z Thornton against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref. CR/2021/0004/FUL, dated 24 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 11 June 2021.
  - The development proposed is erection of single storey front extension.
- 

## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Procedural Matters

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, it is clear from the plans and accompanying details that the development comprises a single storey front & side extension, as described by the appellants on the appeal form and in the decision notice. The Council dealt with the proposal on this basis and I have done the same.
3. Since the appeal was lodged a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been published. However, as the policies of most relevance to this proposal have not changed fundamentally it has not been necessary to seek further comments from the parties.
4. Since the refusal of the appeal proposal, planning permission has been granted for an alternative front and side extension under application ref. CR/2021/0464/FUL. Whilst similar in design to the appeal proposal, the approved extension does not extend across the full width of the dwelling.

## Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the dwelling, the semi-detached pair of which it forms part and the street scene.

## Reasons

6. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling of an original design shared by others in the vicinity. However, these dwellings now differ as a result of

extensions and changes to fenestration and detailing. This includes two-storey side and single-storey front additions. However, despite these changes, the group retains a degree of cohesion.

7. The appeal property has a front porch and the attached dwelling has a two-storey side extension and different style of porch. A dense conifer hedge separates much of the frontages of the two buildings, such that there are few positions from which they are viewed as a pair. With or without the screen planting, the symmetry of the pair has been altered by the respective extensions.
8. The principle of replacing the existing porch with an extended store to the side and a hall extension has been established with the grant of planning permission under ref. CR/2021/0464/FUL. However, whilst the appellant regards the existing porch as an 'alien' feature, it has reasonably limited impact on the dwelling and the street scene as a result of its lightweight design and modest size. The partly flat roof form of the proposal is a feature of the approved extension, and is a design found on another nearby property.
9. Amongst other criteria, Policy CH2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (LP) requires development proposals to respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development. In this case, a notable feature of the street scene is that front extensions do not extend the full width of the property to which they relate, and therefore appear subservient. LP Policy CH3 also requires development to be of high quality in terms of architectural design and to relate sympathetically to their surroundings in matters including scale and massing. The policy requires compliance with supplementary planning guidance produced by the council.
10. The Council's 'Urban Design' Supplementary Planning Document, 2016 (SPD), provides guidance in support of the above policies, and advises that front extensions should be subservient to the rest of the house and not extend across the whole width of the property, nor project more than 1.5m from the original front wall of the main dwelling; and be in keeping with the character of the area and property. In conflict with this guidance, the proposal would appear overly large relative to the width of the main house, and would dominate the dwelling to the detriment of the street scene. I do not share the appellants view that it would appear well-integrated and balanced, or that it would add a positive architectural feature. The replacement of the existing porch would not justify a more intrusive and prominent addition.
11. The proposed bay window would project beyond the 1.5m depth of the extension. Whilst this would conflict with the guidance in the SPD, as a result of its design it would not undermine the purpose of the advice. However, that does not alter my conclusion on the harm resulting from the width, scale and massing of the proposed extension as a whole.
12. Whilst the effect on the semi-detached pair of dwellings of which the building is part would be more limited, the proposal would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene. This would not be offset by the reasonably modest depth of the extension and the use of matching materials.

13. I am mindful of the benefit to the appellants of the additional space, but as proposed this would be at the expense of the street scene and would not outweigh the harm identified.
14. I therefore conclude that the proposal would detract from the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene, contrary to the aims of LP Policies CH2 and CH3, and the guidance in the SPD. It would also conflict with the design aims of the Framework, to create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, and for development to be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment. Whilst I accept that the proposal would be sustainable insofar as it would accord with the economic and social objectives of the Framework, it would conflict with the environmental objective as a result of its effect on the built environment.
15. For the above reasons, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

*H Lock*

INSPECTOR