



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 December 2021

by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 DECEMBER 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/21/3277836

125 Devonshire Way, Croydon CR0 8BY

- 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 Laycock against the decision of London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 21/00699/HSE, dated 14 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is demolition of side garage and utility room and construction of new two-storey side extension and extension of existing raised patio/ deck area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the appeal was lodged the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been issued on 20 July 2021. However, there have been no material changes to the requirements in the Framework's for development to be well-designed and to add to the overall quality of an area. Therefore, it has not been necessary to go back to the parties for further comments in this particular instance.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Devonshire Way is a residential street predominantly characterised by detached and semi-detached two-storey dwellings of traditional style. The appeal dwelling at No 125 Devonshire Way has shared characteristics with the adjoining semi at No 127 including in terms of their width, materials, hipped roofs, subservient front projecting gables with mock-tudor detailing, triangular projecting window to the first-floor front elevation and gable fronted porches. Indeed, there is a strong degree of symmetry to many of the other semi-detached dwellings on this street. Where side extensions have taken place, the width, height, and number of additional window openings to the front elevation are such that these additions more often appear subservient to the scale and appearance of the original dwelling. These defining characteristics give consistency to the street scene and give Devonshire Way an attractive suburban character.

5. 'Chapter 4: Residential Extensions and Alterations' of the Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (SPD) sets out amongst other things that two-storey side extensions must consider the surrounding context. This includes that regard must be given to the existing rhythm of the street including that the symmetry of pairs of semi-detached homes should not be unreasonably interrupted and that extensions do not result in an overly wide or poorly proportioned elevation facing the street.
6. The extension would be set in from the boundary with No 123 Devonshire Way, would be set back at first floor level and would incorporate matching rendered masonry to its walls. Even so, the extension would approximately double the two-storey width of the dwelling. Three window openings would be provided to the first-floor front elevation of the extension which would further emphasise its elongated width. As a result, the proposal would unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings that No 125 forms part and would be detrimental to the appearance of the street scene.
7. The appellant contends that even though the ground floor element of the extension would not be set back from the front elevation of the original dwelling, this is already the case with the garage it would replace. Whilst this might be so, this does not overcome my overall concerns in respect of the width and mass of the two-storey proposal. From my own observations on site, the alignment of the road would not disguise the poorly proportioned design of the proposal for anyone passing by close to the site frontage.
8. My attention has also been drawn to examples of other two-storey side extensions to dwellings in the local area. I am not aware of the planning history of these examples. In any case, they do not persuade me that the appeal proposal would positively reflect the prevailing character of Devonshire Way.
9. I conclude, the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. In that regard, the development would conflict with the requirements for development to adhere to the SPD and to be of high-quality design which respects and enhances local character in Policies SP4 (Urban Design and Local Character) and DM10 (Design and Character) of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 and Policy D3 (Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach) of The London Plan (2021).

Conclusion

10. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area and would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR