



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 December 2021

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th January 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/21/3285621

51 Craigen Avenue, Croydon, CR0 7JQ

- 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 A Meakin against the decision of the Council to the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 21/03116/HSE, dated 11 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 5 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as loft conversion with rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion with rear dormer at 51 Craigen Avenue, Croydon, CR0 7JQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/03116/HSE, dated 11 June 2021 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2194/01, 2194/02, 2194/03, 2194/10, 2194/11 and 2194/20.
 3. Details of the colour/tone and finish of the timber boarding and fibreglass for the walls and roof of the dormer extension hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the external cladding of the dormer extension. The materials to be used in the construction of the windows in the dormer extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling and the proposed roof-lights shall match the existing rooflights on the front roof-slope of the host property.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Craigen Avenue is characterised by small, uniformly designed two storey terraces, with narrow rear gardens of various depths. Consistent with this the appeal property is located at the end of a uniformly designed terrace of six houses. The appeal property occupies a particularly wide plot and the dwelling

- has been extended to the side. This two-storey extension respects the design and proportions of the host dwelling, although it is recessed behind the front building line and its ridge height is slightly lower than that of the host dwelling.
4. Whilst many of the terraces have similar front building lines, the terrace adjacent to the appeal property is set further back and projects into the rear garden environment. The adjacent end property within this terrace (No.53) has a large flat roofed dormer extension. There are a number of other large rear dormer extensions along this side of Craigen Road, some of which sit immediately alongside neighbouring dormer extensions. There is also a large dormer extension on the rear roof-slope of a dwelling to the rear, in Shirley Road. These dormers, together with a number of single storey rear extensions and garden buildings are integral components of the more informal character and appearance of the rear garden environment.
 5. Together and amongst other things Policy D3 of the London Plan 2021 (The London Plan) and Policies SP4 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 (LP) seek to ensure that new development is designed to a high standard, respects and enhances local character and contributes positively to the public realm. To ensure that roof-form positively contributes to local character, design should be sympathetic to the site's local context. Consistent with this the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (The Framework) states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
 6. The Croydon Suburban Design Guide (SPD), similarly advises that residential extensions should respond to the character of the host building and maintain the rhythm of the street scene. It states that full-width dormers may be acceptable on terraced dwellings, but should be set in from gable ends. Dormer extensions should be no higher than the ridge line, spaces to the side of buildings should be retained and the symmetrical elements of the front elevation should be retained. Windows should be generous in size to avoid large blank facades and generally should relate to the fenestration below.
 7. I note that the Council has issued a certificate of lawfulness for the construction of a full width dormer extension on the rear roof-slope of the original dwelling. Planning permission has similarly been granted for an almost full width dormer extension on the roof-slope of the existing side extension. The form, bulk and detailing of both dormers match that of the proposal, albeit individually they would not be as wide.
 8. The proposed dormer extension would be set in slightly from the gable end of the existing building and would sit below the ridge lines of the dwelling. It would also sit just within the main rear building line of the dwelling. The existing windows in the rear elevation of the host property are asymmetrical. The proposed windows would similarly be asymmetrical, although they would reflect the proportions and design of the existing windows. Due to their size and spacing the proposed windows would break up the façade of the dormer extension and would relate appropriately to the existing rear elevation of the dwelling. The width of the dormer extension would be less than that of the combined dormer extensions at 63 & 65 Craigen Avenue.
 9. The application form states that the walls of the dormer would be timber. The timber walls could appear prominent and out of keeping with the roofscape if painted a light colour. Conversely if it were dark stained/painted to blend in with the roofscape it would respect the host property and the terrace as a

- whole. This is something that could be satisfactorily controlled through the imposition of a condition.
10. Within the street scene the only place the dormer cheek could be glimpsed would be from the highway to the front of No.53. Other than this the dormer would be fully screened by the host dwelling and the dwelling at No.53. Within the rear garden environment, the dormer would be partly screened from the south by the dwelling at No.53 and from the north it would be recessed and seen against the backcloth of the dormer extension at No.53. Within the surrounding rear garden environment, the proposed dormer extension would be seen as one of a number of full width dormer windows.
 11. For these reasons I find that the proposed rear dormer extension would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and terrace and would be readily assimilated into the rear garden environment.
 12. The proposal also includes a number of new rooflights on the front roof-slope, which already benefit from planning permission associated with the approved rear dormer on the roof-slope of the side extension. There are a number of rooflights on front roof-slopes within the area and this includes one on the roof-slope of the host dwelling. Provided the proposed roof-light match the existing rooflight I agree with the council that they would not disrupt the street scene.
 13. This is something that could be secured through the imposition of a condition. However, the materials condition suggested by the Council would need to be modified to take into account the use of various types of windows in the dwelling, as well as the proposal to clad the walls with timber and the roof with fibreglass. The Council has also suggested the imposition of a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted drawings. This condition would be necessary in the interests of certainty and enforceability.
 14. I conclude that the proposal would respect and blend in appropriately with the character of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would comply with LP Policies SP4 & SPD, Policy D3 of The London Plan, the SPD and The Framework.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR