



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 June 2022

by K Winnard LL.B Hons Solicitor

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27TH June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/22/3292061
15 Clifton Road Coulsdon CR5 2DW

- 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 S Coombes against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 21/05239/HSE, dated 13 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 December 2021.
 - The development proposed are alterations including the erection of a single storey side and rear extension and loft conversion including erection of a hip to gable roof extension, two dormers to the rear roof slope and two rooflights to the front roof slope.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Procedural Matters

2. The Council amended the description of the development and I note that the applicant's agent has also utilised this description on the appeal form. I have used the Council's description as this provides a more accurate description of the development.
3. The Council has raised no concern with regard to the single storey side and rear extension elements of the proposal in respect of the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. I agree with the assessment of the Council on this matter and am content to deal only with that part of the development which relates to the loft conversion including the hip to gable roof extension, two dormers to the rear roof slope and two rooflights to the front roof slope in my assessment relating to character and appearance. The second reason for refusal set out in the Council's decision notice relates to the issue of fire safety in respect of the proposal as a whole and accordingly I have considered the second issue in the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in this appeal are the effect of the proposed development on (i) the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area and (ii) fire safety.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal property, No 15 Clifton Road (No 15) is a semi detached property, set down from the road, located on a suburban street where there is a mixture of detached and semi detached dwellings of varying design and style. Some of these dwellings have been subject to extensions and alterations including gable alterations and first floor side extensions. The latter, whilst disrupting the balance of the semi detached properties, are on the whole well assimilated into the design of the original dwellings. Overall, these differing alterations have not significantly altered the character and appearance of the area. The area retains a well balanced appearance of dwellings with a regular rhythm and pattern of hipped roofs.
6. The Council's Suburban Design Guide (Design Guide) specifies that any proposal for a hip to gable roof extension should not interrupt the pattern of roof forms visible from the street. The construction of the gable wall to enable the proposed roof conversion and dormers would result in a built form which would be particularly dominant when viewed from Clifton Road. It would disrupt the general underlying pattern of hipped roofs within the area and would be an incongruous feature which would draw the eye. Whilst the rear dormers would be set down slightly from the ridge line and would not extend fully across the roofscape, they would occupy much of the rear roof slope. As such they are not in accordance with the Design Guide. Together with the gable wall, they would be an unduly dominant feature at odds with the host dwelling. Although views of the rear dormers would be limited from the street, they would be visible from a number of neighbouring properties and their gardens. Their dominance would harm the character and appearance of the area.
7. I recognise that there is no conservation area designation for this area nor is there a policy objection to the introduction of a hipped to gable roof. Even so, local and national policy seeks for proposals to be of a high quality design which harmonise with the architectural style of the host dwelling and the area. The proposal would detract from the appearance of balance with the adjoining property and remove the symmetry between the two properties. There is a reasonable gap between Nos 13 and 15. However, the set down from the road of No 15 would exacerbate the visual impact due to the dominant massing of the gable wall addition, which would draw the eye from road level.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposed loft conversion including the erection of a hip to gable roof extension, dormers to the rear roof slope and rooflights to the front roof slope, would be contrary to Policies SP 4.1, DM 10.1, DM 10.7 of The Croydon Local Plan (2018), and Policy D4 of The London Plan (2019). Together these policies require a development to be of a high quality and enhance local character and townscape. It would also conflict with the design objectives of The Suburban Design Guide SPD (2019).

Fire Safety

9. Policy D12 of the London Plan only requires proposals for major development to submit a Fire Statement. This is not the case in this instance and consequently only Criterion A of Policy D12 requires consideration in this appeal proposal. The dwelling is located on a normal width road which would enable a fire engine to drive through and park safely to access if required to do

so. I observed on site that there would also be sufficient space outside No 15 for use as an emergency assembly point. However, further details as to the requirements within Criterion A have not been provided. The appellant's agent has put to me that a formal methodology can be secured by condition. However, no information has been put to me demonstrating that the design details as submitted have taken into account issues of fire safety or that suitable fire safety measures can be incorporated into the proposal as designed. In such circumstances I do not consider it appropriate to secure such information through a condition. Accordingly I find that the proposal would conflict with the objectives and requirements of Policy D12 of the London Plan.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given and taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

K Winnard

INSPECTOR