



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2022

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/21/3284386

First Floor Flat, 10 Stuart Road, Thornton Heath CR7 8RA

- 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 A Ally (BDC Northern House Limited) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 21/02787/FUL, dated 24 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 13 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of first floor flat into separate units and the construction of hip to gable loft conversion with roof lights in the front roof slope and dormers in the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are: (i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene; (ii) whether the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to private amenity space; and (iii) whether the proposal would provide acceptable cycle storage.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey end of terrace house that has been converted into a pair of flats, one on each floor. It occupies a very exposed corner site at the junction between Stuart Road and Cotford Road. It has a hipped roof and a long 2-storey outrigger to the rear with a mono-pitched roof. The flank elevation and outrigger are highly conspicuous elements that form a major component of the street scene in Cotford Road. The property is situated in a residential street and some neighbouring houses include rear roof additions of varying forms.
4. The proposal would comprise the expansion of the roof to form a gable facing Cotford Road and the formation of flat-roofed dormers on the expanded rear roof slope and also above a large proportion of the outrigger. These additions would be highly conspicuous in views along Cotford Road and, due to their siting and size, would represent overly dominant and incongruous elements that would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

5. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Policies SP4 and DM10 of The Croydon Local Plan (2018) (CLP) and London Plan (2021) Policy D3 which, amongst other matters, seek a high quality design that respects local context. There is also conflict with the aims of the Council's Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (SPD).

Living Conditions

6. The appeal property comprises a 2-bedroom flat on the ground floor and a 1-bedroom unit on the upper floor. The former has direct access to the rear garden. The upper floor flat does not have private amenity space directly associated with it.
7. The proposal would create a studio unit within the expanded roof space with a floor area that, according to the application drawings, would accord with the minimum space standard. This additional unit would not have direct access to private amenity space. The appellant has suggested a scheme involving the division of the rear garden into 3 portions, one for each flat, with the garden areas for the upper floor flats accessible via a gate from Cotford Road. These garden spaces would be small, enclosed, overlooked and not readily accessible from the upper floor flat. The subdivision does not therefore provide a meaningful means of providing amenity space for the upper floor flats.
8. I note however that the first floor flat would be retained as is (apart from minor internal changes) and the proposal does not in my view trigger a requirement for private amenity space for this unit. The new additional flat would most likely be occupied by 1 or 2 people. Given this, and the availability of public open space within walking distance and the nature of the property and its surroundings, I am satisfied that in these particular circumstances the absence of private amenity space for the proposed studio unit would not result in unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers of this flat.
9. The proposal therefore accords with CLP Policies SP4 and DM10 and London Plan Policy D6 in so far as they relate to the living conditions of future occupiers of new dwellings.

Cycle Storage

10. As the rear garden of the appeal property is directly accessible from Cotford Road there is clear scope to provide covered and secure cycle storage accessible to future occupiers of the proposed additional dwelling. The Council notes that this could be secured by a planning condition, a view I share.
11. For these reasons the proposal would provide acceptable cycle storage provision and therefore complies with London Plan Policy T5, CLP Policies DM10, DM29 and DM30 and the aims of the Council's SPD.

Conclusion

12. Although I have found that the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers and adequate cycle storage, for the reasons set out under the first main issue, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole INSPECTOR