

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2022

by C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/22/3301191
38 Fitzjames Avenue, Croydon, CR0 5DD

- 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 Sanjeev Shukla against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 22/00368/HSE, dated 31 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extensions, and front bay and porch addition.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for two storey side extensions, and front bay and porch addition at 38 Fitzjames Avenue, Croydon, CR0 5DD in accordance with the terms of the application 22/00368/HSE, dated 31 January 2022, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 070DWGP01A, 070DWGP02, 070DWGP03, 070DWGP04, 070DWGP05A, 070DWGP06A & 070DWGP07A.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The property lies in a road where there are detached houses of varying design on large plots. Unlike most houses in the road the appeal property has a clear degree of symmetry in its design, giving a more formal appearance than other houses. The property also appears smaller in relation to its plot than other houses, with more spacing to the boundaries.
 4. The proposed extensions would see demolition of existing single storey side extensions and the erection of a two storey extensions to the west of the house, and a two/single storey extension to the east of the house. There would also be a new two storey front gable and porch.
-

5. Amongst other matters, the Council's Suburban Design Guide 2019 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out guidance for extensions to residential properties. Part 4.17 of the SPD states that two storey side extensions are appropriate where space is sufficient and the impacts on the townscape and neighbouring properties are considered. Detailed guidance is given, which includes that such extensions '*do not result in an overly wide or poorly proportioned elevation facing the street*'. The SPD then says '*this can usually be avoided by setting the extension back from the front elevation*'; the use of the word '*usually*' indicates each case will be considered on its merits, rather than a setback being a requirement in every situation, and indeed the SPD refers to applications being considered on a case-by-case basis.
6. In this appeal there is no setback to the side elevations. This results in the house retaining a symmetrical appearance which, together with the existing ridge and eaves height being continued in the side extensions, creates a well-balanced house that sits comfortably on its site. The new front gable extension adds to this balanced design and creates a sense of articulation in the front elevation, hence ensuing the scale, width and form of the extended house is suitable for the area. The SPD states that two storey front extensions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and so, in this instance, I consider that part of the works to be acceptable.
7. Although the appeal scheme does not show a set-back in the side elevations or set-down in ridge height, as the Council's Delegated Report evidently wishes to see, the particular circumstances of this case show to me that the extended house would remain of a suitable scale, form and design for the varied townscape character of Fitzjames Avenue. The reduction in the spacing around the house would not impact upon that character, where I saw at my site visit that other houses generally fill their plot.
8. On the main issue I therefore conclude that the proposal satisfies the SPD and Policies DM10 and SP4.1 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018, the general thrust of which is to seek to ensure a high quality built environment and that new development is of a high standard of design appropriate to the local character of an area, and the design-led approach of Policy D3 of the London Plan 2021.
9. The appeal is therefore allowed. The application form and drawings set out the materials to be used in the proposed works and so, in addition to the standard time limiting condition, the sole condition I have attached specifies the approved plans both in the interest of precision and to secure the use of such materials to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.

C J Leigh

INSPECTOR