

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2023

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 23rd March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/22/3312679

6 Pearson Road, Crawley, RH10 7AF

- 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 Steven Cloake against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2021/0491/FUL, dated 18 June 2021, was refused by notice dated 23 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is a single storey replacement front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey replacement front extension at 6 Pearson Road, Crawley, RH10 7AF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref CR/2021/0491/FUL, dated 18 June 2021, 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 plans: 387: 01Rev0, 02RevA & 03Rev0.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached two storey dwelling in a corner position facing open space and close to the point where the post war estate changes to 1960s style development. The locality is of established residential character and the range of buildings, gardens, verges and open spaces lead to a scene of pleasing appearance. The proposal is as described above. An existing porch would be demolished and a new porch with WC built. The proposed structure would project 1.8m from the original front elevation (an increase in projection of about 0.1m compared to the existing porch) and would be 4.5m in width compared to the existing porch width of 3.2m. The roof of the new porch and wc would be hipped; the existing porch is half hipped.
 4. The Council is concerned that the proposed front extension, given siting, size and roof design, would cause harm to visual amenity and the character of the
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street scene. Certainly, forward extensions always need to be carefully considered. Taken in isolation, or if it were, for example, part of a straight row of unaltered homes, I can appreciate why one might find this nature of scheme uncomfortable. However, taking the bigger picture, I find the situation here is not one where there is a need to overly precious about scale, form, uniformity or symmetry.

5. The existing porch is relatively sizeable and reflective of some others found on the estate and the reality is that the proposed scheme would not be greatly larger. Having a fully pitched roof at ground floor level would not appear ill at ease relative to the half hip of the main building given separation and not least because their angle of pitch would be very similar. In the relatively unusual position of the appeal site there is simply no requirement for uniformity with other development 'round the corner' or down the street. Additionally, the semi-detached pair are already not symmetrical. The siting, on a bend, with vegetation locally, and with the streetscene changing so markedly to a very different style of home in such proximity, indicates to me that the appeal property should have a degree of freedom over the form and scale of a front extension and the effect in the streetscene would be benign. Finally, having said all this the scheme is to my mind in any event a pleasing design approach on this building to reasonably create a front porch and ground floor WC.
6. Policies CH2 and CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2025-2030 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters, they call for development to embody good urban design quality, embracing local distinctiveness and being sympathetic in scale, massing, materials and detailing relative to its context. I conclude that the appeal scheme would not run contrary to these policies. Furthermore, whilst exceeding size *guidelines* the appeal scheme would also not conflict with the pertinent objectives of the Urban Design SPD which cannot be expected to cover every eventuality in detail.

Conditions

7. The Council suggests the standard commencement condition along with a requirement for works to be carried out in accordance with listed, approved, plans. I would agree with this to provide certainty. The Council also suggests a condition relating to matching materials but as the application form makes this commitment, I would see this as unnecessary.

Overall conclusion

8. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would not have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the host property or the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR