



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2023

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/22/3313113

4 Southgate Road Gardens, Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 6GR.

- 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 Jack Jacob against the decision of Crawley Borough Council
 - The application Ref CR/2022/0452/FUL, dated 7 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey front and side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two-storey front and side extension at 4 Southgate Road Gardens, Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 6GR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref CR/2022/0452/FUL, dated 7 July 2022, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, drawings: 470/01, 470/02 and 469/03A.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) England Order 2015 (or any order revoking, re-enacting or modifying that Order), no windows or other openings other than those expressly authorised by this permission shall be constructed in the eastern elevation of the proposed extension which adjoins the side boundary with number 16C Stonefield Close without the prior written permission of the local planning authority through a planning application.

Main Issues

2. I consider the main issues to be:
 - a) the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the host property and the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and;

b) the effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of 16C Stonefield Close in terms of a potential to result in overshadowing and loss of light, loss of outlook and an overbearing and dominant visual impact.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property, 4 Southgate Gardens, is a two-storey detached dwelling. It is one of four recently built houses within a small, gated community.
4. The appellant proposes a two-storey front and side extension. The extension would adopt the vernacular form and detailing of the host property and be built of matching materials. The eaves line of the proposed addition would maintain that of the host dwelling, but the ridge line, by reason of the crown roof design, would be set well below the existing.
5. The proposed extension would change the appearance of the dwelling. Nevertheless, I consider that the proposed extension would by reason of its design, form and choice of materials appear as a well-mannered subservient addition that would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the host property.
6. Number 4 is located at the eastern end of the development. Numbers 2-4 are of an identical design with number 1 being of a modified, but similar design and set at an angle to the other three.
7. Number 4 as extended would not match numbers 2 and 3. However, I do not consider that, due to the overall design of the proposed addition, the dwelling's location at the eastern end of the development and as number 1 is already of a slightly modified design it would appear so visually dominant or discordant as to cause significant harm to the visual amenities of the surrounding area.
8. I therefore conclude in respect of the first main issue that the proposed development would not cause harm to the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore accord with the aims of Policies CH2 and CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 (Adopted December 2015) (LP), the guidance in the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (Adopted October 2016) (SPD) and relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) as they relate to, amongst other things, the quality of development.

Living conditions

9. The proposed extension would be built on the eastern flank of the property, the nearest neighbouring property being Wisteria Cottage 16C Stonefield Close. The boundary between the two dwellings is a close boarded fence with part trellis fixed above to screen the ground floor windows of 16C.
10. 16C has two first floor windows, both obscure glazed one serving a bathroom and the other being a secondary bedroom window. Of the two ground floor windows one is a secondary window serving a living room and the other is the sole window to a study.
11. The proposal would result in a significantly taller and longer flank wall facing 16C much closer than the existing side wall. It would also extend further south

than the front wall of number 4. Nevertheless, given that both the bedroom and living room have secondary windows I consider from my observations on site that the habitable room most likely to be adversely affected by the proposed extension would be the study.

12. Given the existing close boarded fence and trellis I am not persuaded that the proposed extension would result in a loss of outlook to the west to the study or indeed the living room. Further, I do not consider having regard to the distance between the flank wall of 16c and the boundary fence that the extension which would in any case be set back from the common boundary would result in a loss of day light to the study, living room or bedroom windows. Furthermore, given the current relationship of the dwellings one to another I do not believe that the proposed extension would have a significantly overshadowing effect or have any significant impact on existing levels of sunlight from the west.
13. I appreciate that the land where number 4 is now located was until recently open ground and that the new flank wall will be closer to the common boundary than the existing side elevation. However, on balance, given the choice of cladding materials which would serve to break up the mass of the new side wall, the hipped roof of the addition and the relatively high density of the surrounding development I do not believe that the addition would be markedly more dominant or overbearing on the neighbouring occupier than the existing house.
14. I conclude in respect of the second main issue that the proposal would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of Wisteria Cottage 16 C Stonefield Close in respect of overshadowing, loss of light, loss of outlook or overbearing and dominant visual impact. The development would therefore accord with the objectives of LP Policy CH3, the guidance in the SPD and the Framework in respect of the protection of residential living conditions.

Conditions

15. The conditions follow from those suggested by the Council. To ensure a high quality development, I shall include a condition about the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building.
16. To protect neighbours' living conditions, I shall remove permitted development rights in respect of the formation of new openings in the eastern elevation of the extension.
17. In the interests of certainty, I shall impose a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusions

18. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR