



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2023

by J Wellstead BA(Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/22/3304967

**7 Ninfield Court, Salvington Road, Bewbush, West Sussex, Crawley
RH11 8UR**

- 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 Elizabeth Abreu against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2022/0147/FUL, dated 4 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is a ground floor front extension, floor redesign and all associated works at 7 Ninfield Court.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The emerging Crawley Borough Local Plan 2021-2037 is in the consultation stage prior to examination. As it is therefore not yet adopted and it is unclear what unresolved objections there are, I have afforded it limited weight.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is an end-of-terrace property in a residential estate characterised by similar two-storey terrace rows with projecting flat-roofed porches on the front elevations. The entrances are on the side elevation of each porch, with a uniform spacing of gaps between the porches of each adjoining building.
5. While there have been some alterations to a small proportion of the properties, the terraces in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site are predominantly uniform in appearance, with a consistent architectural rhythm which contributes positively towards the distinctive character of the area.
6. The Council's Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016) (SPD) provides guidance on the design of householder extensions. It sets out that extensions should relate appropriately to the host dwelling and wider area with due consideration of existing roof pitches. It highlights that front extensions are particularly significant due to their impact on the appearance of a building, especially in the case of terraced dwellings. It further states that front

extensions should not extend across the full width of the host property, and project no more than 1.5m from the original front wall.

7. The appeal proposal would be a full width front extension which would close the majority of the gap between the host property's porch and the porch of the adjoining building No.8 Ninfield Court, interrupting the existing uniform pattern of the terrace and wider area. The repurposing of the gap and the existence of open space adjacent to the appeal site would not compensate for the loss of the gap, as it is characteristic of the terrace and wider area within which the property sits.
8. The appeal property is located next to a playground, fronts onto a pavement and overlooks a large open space area. Although there are mature trees adjacent to the front of the property, the site is otherwise situated within a relatively flat, open and prominent location with wide views from the public realm. Given its prominent location, the incongruity of the proposal would be obvious from a variety of viewpoints along the street.
9. Although the proportions, siting and alignment of the proposed fenestrations would match that of the existing host property, the proposed width, projection and design of the appeal scheme would conflict with the design guidance set out in the SPD. It would result in an unsympathetic development that would dominate and be disproportionate to the front elevation of the host building and fail to respect the original scale and appearance of the host property, terrace and wider estate.
10. The location of the entrance would change from the side elevation to the front elevation. The scheme would be situated flush to the boundary of the existing porch, projecting out from the main building and resulting in the loss of the original limited width of the porch. This would be an incongruous addition which would disrupt the existing predominant pattern in the terrace of flat roofed porches with entrances on the side elevation thereby causing harm to the character of host property, the terrace and the wider area.
11. The appellant has highlighted the full width front extension at No.17 Punnetts Court. However, it is of a lower height and lower roof pitch, in a less prominent position, is within a corner of Punnetts Court which has a more irregular and staggered arrangement and is set forward from the adjoining dwelling on one side and set back from the adjoining dwelling on the other side, resulting in a different context than the appeal scheme. In any event, the fact that apparently similar development has been granted permission is not a reason, on its own, to allow unacceptable development.
12. No.82 Langley Walk, No.2 Netherwood, and No.17 Cuckmore Crescent are not in the immediate vicinity of the appeal property and the host properties are of a different design, form and character in comparison to that of the appeal property.
13. Consequently, I conclude that the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It therefore conflicts with Policies CH2 and CH3 of the CBLP. These policies seek to ensure - amongst other things - that extensions and alterations to existing dwellings are of a high design quality which are sympathetic to the existing dwelling while not adversely affecting the character of the area. It also conflicts with the SPD which seeks to ensure that extensions and alterations achieve

good quality in design. The proposed development also conflicts with The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) which seeks to achieve well-designed places.

Other Matters

14. The Framework supports the effective use of land, avoiding low density homes and making the optimal use of the potential of each site. The proposed provision of additional internal space would add to the floorspace of the dwelling and thereby have some optimising effect, however any such benefit would not outweigh the harms caused by the proposed development as set out above.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given, the development fails to accord with the relevant policies of the development plan and the Framework. There are no material considerations in this case which indicate that a decision should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Wellstead

INSPECTOR