



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 August 2023

by Stewart Glassar BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16TH August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/W/23/3314317

24 Mannings Close, Pound Hill, West Sussex RH10 3TX

- 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 James Burgess against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref CR/2022/0359/FUL, dated 9 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'single storey extension to the front of semi detached house to the size of 8.63m². Change of use from a garage to a living area. Existing flat roof to be changed to a pitched elevation including the addition of 3 skylights.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached dwelling located within a cul-du-sac of largely similar properties. The houses have pitched roofs with side gables. Aside from a separate group of dwellings at the northern end of the road, an inherent design element appears to be that each pair of houses was constructed with a pair of attached, flat roof garages projecting from the front of the building.
4. Over time various alterations and extensions have taken place to the dwellings, including new porches and conversion of some garages to habitable rooms. However, most dwellings have retained a flat roof to their forward projections. There are three dwellings where mono-pitch roofs have been introduced onto the front elevation, but nonetheless much of the character of the road is derived from the broad similarity in the appearance of the buildings.
5. Aside from these mono-pitch front extensions being limited in number, they are also each at the end of a row of houses. Whilst this does not hide them entirely, it does at least reduce their prominence within the street scene. The Council indicate that two were approved under previous development plan policies but the most recent example, at No. 13, was permitted because of its position and limited prominence.

6. Nevertheless, these mono-pitch roof extensions to the front of these dwellings are by their very design going to be more prominent than the prevailing front projections. This different design and prominence creates a somewhat awkward juxtaposition within the street scene and to my mind, these extensions do not contribute to the character of the area.
7. The appeal site is positioned centrally within a row of semi-detached houses. Despite their staggered positioning, the appeal property has a greater prominence within the street scene than those houses which have already introduced similar mono-pitch extensions. Accordingly, introducing the proposed mono-pitch roof extension at the appeal site would be at odds with the form and appearance of the properties that contribute most to its immediate and prevailing context. As such it would harm both the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area and so would not be appropriate.
8. The proposal would be contrary to Policies CH2 and CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 which, amongst other things, requires developments to respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development as well as demonstrating an understanding of a site's immediate and wider context. For similar reasons the proposal would be contrary to the Council's 'Urban Design' Supplementary Planning Document 2016.
9. The proposal would also be contrary to Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which amongst other things, seeks to ensure developments are sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

10. The proposal would use materials to match the existing dwelling. However, neither this nor the main house roof being pitched, would overcome the harm I have identified.
11. Although two of the dwellings with mono-pitch front roofs are visible from the appeal site, for the reasons given above, I do not consider those extensions represent justification for the proposed development.
12. I acknowledge that there can be practical issues associated with having a flat roof. That said, the weight I could attach to such factors would be insufficient against the harm and conflict with the development plan that I have found and to which I ascribe substantial weight.

Conclusion

13. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and wider area and would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Stewart Glassar

INSPECTOR