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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 January 2024

**by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 9<sup>TH</sup> February 2024**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/23/3332317**

**9 Ballards Farm Road, South Croydon, CR2 7JB**

- 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 Ravi Saksema against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
  - The application Ref 23/00954/HSE, dated 8 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2023.
  - The development proposed is erection of a part single, part two-storey extension and loft conversion including roof extensions, increase in ridge height and installation of three rooflights.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. I have taken the description of development from the Council's decision notice and which was repeated by the appellant on the appeal form. This is a slightly more detailed version that better describes the full extent of the works compared with the description that was given on the application form and which read "*Erection of Part single/Part two-storey extension plus loft conversion*".

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host property and the wider area.

### Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey, detached dwelling with a hipped roof and with forward and rear facing two-storey gabled features. Ballards Farm Road is an unadopted narrow lane which runs across a valley side and serves a number of well-spaced detached residences. No 9 sits below the level of the road with steeply sloping front and rear gardens. The proposal would see the property extended to the east side at two-storey, with a further sideways projection at single-storey. This element would span approximately half-the building's depth and would wrap around part of its front elevation, projecting an existing recess forward. In addition, new living space is proposed at second floor level by an upwards roof extension, raising the height of the ridge by 1.2m.

5. The appeal site and surroundings are heavily vegetated, including with mature trees to the front. However, despite this, and the topography of the area with the dwelling's threshold being set below the lowest level of the front garden, the property is by no means undetected or out of sight. Its two-storey scale and balanced proportions can be clearly seen and understood from Ballards Farm Road, a public right of way, where it sits comfortably between the two-storey but alternatively proportioned properties either side at Nos 7 and 11. In addition, the rear facing gable and traditional roof form of the property can be seen nestling into the valley side from the lower levels of Croham Valley Road to the south.
6. I share the appellant's view that the side extension would appear well-integrated with the appearance of the dwelling. It would principally project the form of the existing building sideways in a relatively modest way. With materials and detailing that would match, I find that this part of the proposal, in isolation, would be in-keeping with the character and form of the existing dwelling and wider area.
7. In contrast, the alterations at roof level would have a much more marked effect. Rather than conversion of an existing loft space to living accommodation, the proposal would involve the creation of a new floor at second floor level, with an extension that would effectively sit as a cap on top of the existing roof. The extension's vertical render clad walls would be visible as a band around the existing roof slopes, and topped with a new pyramidal pitched roof with its own eaves, gutters, and roof void. I accept that the roof addition would be subservient in terms of its floor plan, with its walls stepped away from the perimeter walls of the existing building, but the result would be a major remodelling of the dwelling's form and appearance.
8. A significant proportion of the existing rear roofscape would be lost in favour of a rendered face at second floor level that would dominate, spanning a majority part of the roof's width. This would be repeated on the west, side elevation. The extension's rendered walls on the front and east side elevations would be less conspicuous due to either the extent of their visual exposure or their recessed position. Nevertheless, the overall impact would be considerably more bulk and built form at an elevated level.
9. The natural top of the building's façade would obviously be seen to rise as a consequence of the addition, resulting in a complex roof hierarchy that would be difficult to understand and which would exaggerate an unorthodox vertical emphasis to the proportions of the building. This would be misplaced in my opinion. For this reason, I do not share the appellant's view that the alterations would complement the original design of the house. The upward expansion of the dwelling would be openly viewed from Ballards Farm Road, including obliquely from where the roof to the west elevation is seen in the background rising above the lower set position of No 7, and from longer distance views to the south from Croham Valley Road. In my judgement it would appear incongruous and unsympathetic to the traditional composition and character of the existing dwelling.
10. Based on my assessment of the proposed side extension, I have considered whether it would be appropriate to issue a split decision in this instance. However, the two component parts of the proposal are not clearly severable. I have therefore concluded that the development as a whole would be harmful to

the character and appearance of 9 Ballards Farm Road and, in turn, the wider area. As such, there would be conflict with Policy DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan (CLP) adopted in 2018, particularly part DM10.7 which seeks to ensure development creates a high quality built environment, and specifically its criterion d that explicitly requires the design of roof-form to positively contribute to the character of the local and wider area. The proposal's failure to display a high quality of design that would respect the area's local character means that there would also be conflict with CLP Policy SP4. For the same reasons there would also be conflict with Policy D3 of The London Plan 2021 and the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

### **Conclusion**

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

*John D Allan*

INSPECTOR