



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2024

by J Reid BA(Hons) BArch(Hons) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q3820/D/24/3349272

18 Hereford Close, Tilgate, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 5JB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Kocel against the decision of Crawley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is CR/2023/0615/FUL.
 - The development proposed is front single storey and rear two storey extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues are the effect that the proposed development would have on:
 - the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and
 - the living conditions of the occupiers of 17 Hereford Close regarding outlook, and daylight and sunlight.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is situated on the roughly north side of the partly verge edged Hereford Close within the Tilgate neighbourhood, which is one of the earliest parts of the New Town. The site includes the mostly 2 storey appeal dwelling, which is located at the roughly east end of a terrace of mostly uniform light fronted dwellings with modest front spaces or gardens and moderate back gardens. The site adjoins the attached dwelling and its grounds at 17 Hereford Close to roughly west, the end of the back garden of 59 Winchester Road to roughly north, and the ends of the back gardens including those at 10, 12 and 14 Worcester Road to roughly east.
4. In keeping with most others in the terrace, the appeal dwelling includes a shallow flat roofed store and front door canopy, but the canopy at 10 Hereford Close has an original shallow pitched roof. Two terraces with similar features face the verdant space a little further west on the south side of the close. The unified composition and ordered appearance of all 3 of the terraces in Hereford Close (the group) makes an important positive contribution to the local suburban character, to the townscape of the New Town, and to the sense of place.

5. The proposal includes a lean-to front outshoot in place of the front canopy and store, and an almost full width 2 storey extension at the back of the appeal dwelling with a single storey lean-to outshoot on its east side.
6. As the site is close to the junction of Hereford Close with Worcester Road, most of the appeal dwelling is readily visible in the nearby views from both streets. Due to its scale, bulk, form and siting, the proposed front porch (porch) would be an incongruous addition, which would fail to respect the simple form and ordered composition of the appeal dwelling. For the same reasons, the porch would unacceptably erode the largely consistent character and appearance of the dwellings in the terrace, to the detriment of the terrace and the group. So, the proposal would harm the Hereford Close street scene, and that harm would be seen from the nearby part of Worcester Road.
7. Because one side of the back garden of 14 Worcester Road adjoins Hereford Close, much of the appeal dwelling, and the openness over its nearby back garden, can be appreciated from the nearby parts of both streets. As the ridge of the gabled back extension (extension) would be nearly as tall as the ridge of the existing dwelling, and as the extension would be about as wide as the dwelling, its dominant and bulky 2 storey form would harmfully intrude into the views above the boundary treatments from the nearby parts of Worcester Road and Hereford Close. As the upper part of the extension would align with the east side of the dwelling, it would diminish the scale and form of the appeal dwelling, which is important to the scale, form and character of the terrace and the group. Due to its substantial scale and bulk, the extension would harmfully erode the openness at the back of the dwelling, which is important to the local suburban character. Moreover, as the lean-to at the side of the extension would project beyond the side of the existing dwelling, its discordant form would detract from the street scene in Hereford Close.
8. As the other developments referred to by the appellant, including 36 Worcester Road, 27 Chichester Close and 59 Winchester Road, predate current Development Plan policy and guidance, they provide little support for this damaging scheme.
9. Therefore, I consider that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would be contrary to Policy CH2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 (LP) which aims for proposals to reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development, LP Policy CH3 which seeks high quality design and respect for context, guidance in the Crawley Borough Council Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) which seeks to achieve well-designed buildings and places, and sympathy for local character.

Living conditions

10. Due to the distances and relationships between the extension and the dwelling and its back garden at 17 Hereford Close, the extension would be unacceptably overbearing and oppressive in the outlook from the rooms in the back of the dwelling at 17 Hereford Close and in the nearby parts of its back garden. However, for the same reasons, and as the backs of 17 and 18 Hereford Close face roughly north, the extension would not cause a harmful loss of daylight or sunlight in the rooms in the back of the dwelling at 17 Hereford Close or in its back garden close by.

11. Thus, I consider that the proposal would harm the living conditions of the occupiers of 17 Hereford Close regarding outlook. It would be contrary to LP Policy CH3 which seeks a good standard of amenity for all occupants of land and buildings and which aims for residential extensions to comply with relevant supplementary planning guidance, guidance in the SPD, and the Framework which seeks a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Other matter

12. Whilst the proposal aims to make effective use of the site and its other benefits would include jobs during construction, they do not outweigh the harm identified in my main issues.

Conclusion

13. I have found that the proposed development would be contrary to the Development Plan when taken as a whole. The other considerations in this case, including the Framework, do not outweigh that conflict.
14. For the reasons given, the appeal should be dismissed.

J Reid

INSPECTOR