
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2018

by Felicity Thompson BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th October 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/18/3196034

73 Ravenswood Road, Croydon, CR0 4BL

- 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 & Mrs Towers against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 17/02951/FUL, dated 12 June 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 October 2017.
 - The development proposed is 2no. bedroom dwelling on land adjacent to: 73 Ravenswood Road, Croydon, CR0 4BL.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of attached two storey two bedroom dwelling at 73 Ravenswood Road, Croydon, CR0 4BL, in accordance with the terms of the application reference 17/02951/FUL, dated 12 June 2017, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matters

2. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the original planning application form. For the purposes of my formal decision I have used the description given by the Council on the decision notice and in the appellant's appeal form as this more accurately describes the development.
3. Since the appeal was submitted the Government has published a new National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Both parties were invited to comment on whether they consider the revisions to have relevance to their case. I have taken any comments received into consideration and I have assessed this appeal in light of the revised Framework.
4. I am aware that the policies from the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan The Croydon Plan referred to by the Council in its decision notice have been superseded by policies from the Croydon Local Plan (2018) which was adopted since the appeal was submitted. The Council provided an updated policy position in their statement and I have considered the appeal in accordance with the new policies.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. 73 Ravenswood Road is a two storey end of terrace house located at the corner of Ravenswood Road with Warrington Road, in a predominantly residential area. The houses in this terrace are of relatively modern, simple and largely uniform appearance. On the opposite side of Ravenswood Road are terraced houses of traditional appearance with the exception of a pair of semi-detached houses opposite no.73. The appeal site is the side garden to no.73 and has an irregular shape, being wider at the front with Ravenswood Road and narrowing to the rear.
7. Whereas the house in the previously dismissed scheme was designed to 'match' no.73 both in terms of design and scale, the proposed house would have a lower ridge line and the first floor element is set back behind the front elevation of no.73. As a result the proposed house would have a subservient appearance. It has been designed to incorporate features and materials which reflect the appearance of no.73 however, the reduction in height and setting back of the first floor element results in the considerable reduction of the overall scale and massing of the development from that which was previously proposed. Furthermore, the introduction of a small window in the gable elevation would have the effect of breaking up the otherwise blank appearance of this elevation.
8. Although the proposed house would bring the end of the terrace closer to the public highway, the reduction in the width from the previous scheme ensures that a gap of about 5.5m would be retained between the front of the house and the side boundary, reducing to about 1.1m at the rear corner. Whilst at the rear the proposed house would come close to the public highway, there is adequate room for landscaping, which can be controlled by condition as suggested by the Council. This would further reduce the visual impact from the public highway. Consequently, because of the reduction in the overall scale from the previous proposal, in my judgement, the proposed house would not be dominant in the street scene.
9. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed house would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area in accordance with policies SP4 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) and policies 7.1, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016) which together seek high quality development that enhances and respects the local character and has regard to the pattern and grain of existing streets in scale, proportion and mass. It would also accord with the design aims of the Framework.

Conditions

10. The Council has suggested a number of conditions which I have considered against advice in the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). As a result I have undertaken some editing and rationalisation of the conditions proposed by the Council in the interests of precision and clarity and omitted others.
11. I have imposed conditions limiting the life of the planning permission and specified the approved plans, for certainty. In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance I have included a condition requiring the materials to match those of no.73.

12. I have imposed a condition in respect of hard and soft landscaping, which includes details relating to boundary treatments, vehicle access and layout, refuse storage and cycle storage. This condition is necessary to protect the character and appearance of the area. I have imposed a separate condition in respect of surface water drainage for precision.
13. The Council has recommended a condition that has the effect of removing permitted development rights in respect of the insertion of windows in the eastern and southern elevations. However, PPG advises that conditions restricting permitted development rights will rarely pass the test of necessity and should only be used in exceptional circumstances. The reason given by the Council is in the interests of the visual amenity of the area. However, the eastern elevation adjoins no.73 and there is limited space in the southern elevation to insert additional windows. On this basis and having regard to PPG, I do not consider that such a condition is reasonable or necessary and as such I have omitted this.
14. The Council has also recommended conditions in respect of water use targets and reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. These conditions do not detail how the targets should be met and as such are not precise or enforceable and I have omitted them.

Conclusion

15. I have found no harm to the character and appearance of the area. I therefore conclude, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule, the appeal is allowed.

Felicity Thompson

INSPECTOR

Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: location plan June 2017, block plan May 2017, proposed plans & elevations April 2017, Flood Risk Assessment.
- 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in materials to match those used in the external surfaces of number 73 Ravenswood Road.
- 4) No above ground development shall commence until details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include:
 - i) means of enclosure and retaining structures;
 - ii) boundary treatments;
 - iii) vehicle access and parking layouts;
 - iv) cycle parking and storage;
 - v) other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
 - vi) hard surfacing materials;

vii) refuse storage

The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details before the development is first occupied.

- 5) No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until surface water drainage works shall have been implemented in accordance with details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Before any details are submitted to the local planning authority an assessment shall be carried out of the potential for disposing of surface water by means of a sustainable drainage system, having regard to Defra's non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (or any subsequent version), and the results of the assessment shall have been provided to the local planning authority. Where a sustainable drainage scheme is to be provided, the submitted details shall:
- i) provide information about the design storm period and intensity, the method employed to delay and control the surface water discharged from the site and the measures taken to prevent pollution of the receiving groundwater and/or surface waters;
 - ii) include a timetable for its implementation; and,
 - iii) provide, a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.