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APPEAL STATEMENT

<Address Redacted>

6 January 2021

Reference: 76421

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Appeal Statement has been prepared on behalf of <client names redacted> to support an appeal against the decision of the London Borough of Croydon to refuse planning permission for householder extensions at <address redacted>.
- 1.2 Following a description of the site and surrounding area, the report will set out an overview of relevant planning policy and outline the case for the appellants.
- 1.3 It will be demonstrated that the proposal complies with relevant local and national policies and that planning permission should therefore be granted.

BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On <date>, the appellants submitted an application to the London Borough of Croydon (reference: <redacted>) for the following development.

Demolition of the existing outbuilding and the erection of single/two storey front/side extension.
- 2.2 On <date>, the council notified the appellants that the application had been refused, for the following reason:
 1. *The development would detract from the character and appearance of the dwelling and would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the street scene by reason of scale, massing and design and would thereby conflict with Policy SP4.1 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018, Supplementary Planning Document Suburban Design Guide Chapter 4 on Residential Extensions and Alterations and Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan 2011 (consolidated with alterations since 2015).*

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The appeal site comprises a two-storey, semi-detached house located at the western end of <road name redacted>. It is set back, and at a 90-degree angle, from the road and fronts on to a large area of public open space. It is

accessed via a path leading from <road name redacted>. It has a large side garden located between the house and the boundary with <road name redacted>. There is a brick-built outbuilding in the side garden. An image of the property, viewed from the street, is provided below.



- 3.2** The surrounding area is largely residential in character, made up of terraced rows of twentieth-century, brick-built housing with a simple form and unadorned architectural design. A number of the properties have been altered and extended in various ways, contributing some diversity to the streetscene.
- 3.3** The application building is not listed and does not lie within the Green Belt or within a designated conservation area.

APPEAL PROPOSAL

- 4.1** The appeal proposal is for the demolition of the existing outbuilding in the side garden and the erection of a two-storey side extension. The new extension is 5.25m wide. It includes a front porch to the main house and a forward projection at ground floor level to align with the porch.
- 4.2** It is set back slightly at first floor level to create a visual distinction between the old and new part of the house. It has a matching, pitched roof form and uses matching materials. It has matching arrays of bifolding windows at ground and first floor level. The first-floor windows have a Juliet balcony.

PLANNING POLICY

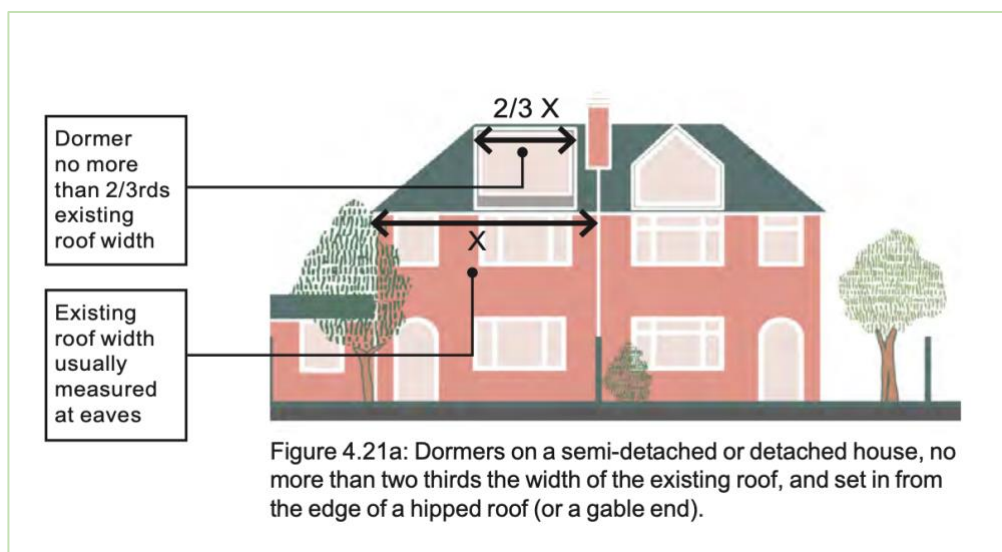
- 5.1** The development plan for the area comprises the Croydon Local Plan, adopted in 2018, and the London Plan, 2016. According to the Decision Notice, the application was refused on the basis of policies SP4.1 and DM10 of the Local Plan.
- 5.2** Policy SP4.1 requires that all new development exhibit a high quality of design and appearance. It is a strategic level policy and does not provide guidance on householder development.
- 5.3** Policy DM10 (Design and character) requires that development is appropriate in terms of its "scale, height, massing, and density". It also states that:
- “Where an extension or alteration is proposed, adherence to Supplementary Planning Document 2 Residential Extensions and Alterations or equivalent will be encouraged to aid compliance with the policies contained in the Local Plan.”*
- 5.4** DM10.6 requires that *"the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining buildings are protected"* in terms of a loss of privacy, daylight and sunlight.

CASE FOR THE APPELLANTS

- 6.1** The council does not object in principle to the extension of this house to improve and enlarge its living accommodation. It is also satisfied that the development will cause no harm to living conditions at neighbouring properties. The sole issue is whether it will harm the character and appearance of the property and the wider streetscene.
- 6.2** Policy SP4.1 of the Local Plan requires that new development exhibits a high quality of design. Policy DM10 requires that the siting, layout and form of new development respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 6.3** The officer's report argues that the side extension is disproportionate because it is contrary to section 4.21 of the Suburban Design SPD, which:

"states that if any proposed side roof extension should not be more than two thirds the width of the existing roof and should not interrupt the appearance of the roof when viewed from the street."

- 6.4** However, this guidance applies to dormer extensions to an existing roof, not to two-storey side extensions. This is clear from the image used to illustrate the advice, which shows that rear dormers should be no more than 2/3rd of the width, as shown in the image below.



- 6.5** The section of the SPD dealing with two-storey side extensions is section 4.17. It places no specific restriction on the width of side extensions. It simply requires that *"space is sufficient"* and that *"the impacts on the townscape and neighbouring properties are considered"*. It also requires that characteristic gaps between neighbouring houses are not removed and the existing rhythm and pattern of development along the street is preserved.
- 6.6** In this case, the appeal property and its semi-detached neighbour do not face onto the main road. They are set well back from it and front onto the downs, accessed via a path.
- 6.7** In addition, the side garden at is very large. Though the proposed extension is 5.25m wide, it will still be set fully 6.9m away from the boundary with the road. As a result, it is not possible that the extended house should appear cramped on the site or appear prominent when viewed from the street.
- 6.8** There is no erosion of the gap between neighbouring houses and no 'terracing effect', whereby the house visually coalesces with one of its neighbours. The existing gap is not a characteristic of the area and, even if it were, a very large gap would be retained.

- 6.9** The width of the extension (5.25m) is lesser than the width of the main house (6.975m). Although an extension of this width might appear disproportionate in some circumstances, it is, in this case, an appropriate response to the size of the site and absence of a uniform pattern of development in the immediate area.
- 6.10** The officer's report suggests that the absence of a 1m setback at first floor level means that the development unbalances the semi-detached pair. However, the modest setback that has been incorporate does serve to create a distinction between the old and new parts of the house.
- 6.11** In any case, the houses have a simple architectural form and, rather than unbalancing the symmetry of the pair (which might be the case if they had offset bay windows or hipped roofs, for example), the extension replicates the existing design and the houses will appear to a casual observer to have the general form and appearance of a terraced row of three (similar to the other terraces nearby).

CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1** The council does not object in principle to the appeal development and does not believe that it will cause any harm to neighbours' living conditions. It is concerned that it will harm the character and appearance of the property and the wider area.
- 7.2** The proposal generally complies with the supplementary guidance set out in the Suburban Design Guide SPD. The case officer misapplies guidance that suggests dormer windows should be no wider than 2/3 of the main roof - there is no such limit for side extensions.
- 7.3** Since the two houses are set away from the street, somewhat isolated from neighbours and orientated in a different direction, there is no possibility of a terracing effect and less likelihood of harm to the streetscene.
- 7.4** In this context, the width of the extension is not disproportionate. There is no need to set it back 1m from the first floor (the proposed, lesser setback achieves visual articulation) and the front extension and enlarged openings (with Juliet balcony) do not cause material harm to visual amenities.

7.5 For these reasons, the appellant contends that the extension represents sustainable development of the kind encouraged by the NPPF and the inspector is respectfully requested to allow the appeal.



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