

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by Michael Moffoot DipTP MRTPI DipMgt MCMI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 23 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/17/3167197

164 Pampisford Road, South Croydon CR2 6DA

- 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 J Madhavan against the decision of London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref: 16/05123/FUL, dated 3 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is alteration of approved garage outbuilding using the disused attic space for storage/office space. Provision of lightwell to the basement. Installation of additional windows and doors to the approved elevations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant has set out at some length the merits of the proposal as he sees them under the heading 'Description of the Proposal' on the planning application form. The description in the header above is taken from the Council's decision notice, which more accurately and succinctly reflects the development proposed.
3. The Council's decision notice does not include a reason for refusal. However, the officer's report includes a single reason for refusal which is referred to in the appellant's grounds of appeal. I do not therefore consider that this error has prejudiced the appellant's case.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is prominently located at the junction of Pampisford Road and Barnards Place and comprises a substantial three-storey building containing nine flats together with associated garden and parking space. The proposed garage would be located in the rear garden area with access off Barnards Place. The plans indicate garaging at ground level and storage/office accommodation in the basement and roofspace, together with an external lightwell. The building would be solely used by the occupiers of the three bedroomed flat in the main building.
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6. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character with dwellings of varied age, style and scale. Cumnor House School lies opposite the site and includes a substantial range of buildings and associated open space set within a generous plot.
7. Planning permission was granted in October 2013¹ for a detached double garage on the site as part of a larger proposal which included conversion, extensions and alterations to the dwelling to form flats. In addition to vehicle parking, the approved garage featured basement storage and a conventional pitched roof with vertical gables. Excluding the lightwell, the proposed building would be of a similar footprint to the approved scheme and the maximum height would be slightly lower. It would incorporate a steeply sloping mansard roof to provide accommodation within the roofspace.
8. A large section of the existing boundary wall fronting Barnards Place would be removed to provide access to the garage and forecourt parking together with visibility splays. This would render the building highly prominent in the street scene and it would also be visible from the adjoining flats. Whilst the roof form would broadly reflect that of the main building on the site, the proposal would be cumbersome and ungainly, with pronounced overhanging eaves giving it a very top heavy appearance. The visual impact of the development would be compounded by the large lightwell and a good number of windows, doors and rooflights. Although its scale may be subordinate to the main building and the adjoining dwelling at No 1 Barnards Place, I do not agree that the proposal would create more “visual interest” as the appellant asserts.
9. As a consequence, the building would be unduly conspicuous and markedly out of keeping with housing on Barnards Place, which is characterised by detached dwellings on generous plots. Although a number feature hipped or half-hipped roofs, none have mansard roofs with the exception of a few car ports of relatively modest scale. Roof forms on Pampisford Road in the vicinity of the site are also varied, but none reflect that of the proposed building with the exception of the flatted development on the appeal site, which does not justify the proposal. Within this local context the proposal would be a discordant structure which would fail to assimilate satisfactorily into its urban setting.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with those parts of Policies SP1.2, SP4.1 and SP4.2 of the Local Plan², Policies UD2 and UD3 of the UDP³ and Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan which require high quality development that positively contributes, responds to and enhances local character and distinctive qualities and respects the existing development pattern.

Other Matters

11. Whilst not a concern of the Council, local residents cite loss of outlook, daylight and sunlight to No 1 Barnards Place. However, the side door to the property is screened by the boundary fence and the small first floor window above is obscure glazed. In addition, there are tall conifers bordering the rear garden. As such, the occupiers’ living conditions would not be harmed by the development

¹ Council ref: 13/01330/P

² *Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies*

³ *Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan*

12. Concerns are also raised about the potential to use the building as a dwelling. However, that is not a matter before me in this appeal, which is confined to the development as proposed and upon which the Council reached its decision. The proposal would not lead to a material increase in traffic such that highway safety would be prejudiced nor would it amount to overdevelopment of the site.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposal is unacceptable and the appeal should be dismissed.

Michael Moffoot

Inspector