



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 November 2019

by Rachael Pipkin, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/19/3235870

44 Woodside Avenue, South Norwood, London, SE25 5DJ

- 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 Mrs Patricia Shaw against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref: 18/04165/HSE dated 1 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 4 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is drop kerb in front of house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - highway safety; and
 - the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Highway safety

3. Woodside Avenue is a one-way street with a marked out contra-flow cycle path and forms part of a pedestrian route, linking Woodside Avenue to Cobden Road, via Cobden Path. The majority of properties have no dedicated off-street parking and the street has parking on both sides. At the time of my site visit, in the middle of the day, it was heavily parked.
4. The proposed development would be to create an off-road parking space by creating a dropped kerb and vehicular access across the pavement to enable a car to be parked parallel to the highway within the front garden of Number 44 Woodside Avenue (No. 44).
5. The Council advises that the recommended minimum dimensions for a car space are 4.8 metres by 2.4 metres with additional space for manoeuvring, access and loading/unloading. The proposed parking space is indicated to be 6.38 metres long by 2.33 metres and would not meet these minimum dimensions.

6. The front garden to the No. 44 is very narrow and while it may be possible to accommodate a small car parked parallel to the highway, in order to do so it would require manoeuvring along the footpath. This would greatly increase the risk of collisions with other highway users, particularly pedestrians, on what appears to be a well-used pedestrian route given its footpath links to nearby streets. Furthermore, due to the small size of the space, if a larger vehicle were to be parked there, it is likely that it would overhang the pavement, thereby blocking the pavement and potentially causing pedestrians to have to step out onto the carriageway.
7. The formation of a dropped kerb would result in the loss of an on-street parking space. The length of the proposed dropped kerb required to facilitate the off-street parking would also be longer than a single car and it would therefore reduce on-street parking capacity by more than the amount of car parking the proposal would deliver. It would therefore lead to a net loss in parking capacity on a road that is heavily parked. This could contribute to parking stress along the street and give rise to both nuisance and highway safety issues arising from people either parking inconsiderately or driving around looking for spaces.
8. My attention has been drawn to Numbers 6, 37, 39 and 49 Woodside Avenue which all have dropped kerbs. With the exception of No. 6, these houses are on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site where properties are set back behind deeper front gardens with more space for off-street parking and for vehicles to park perpendicular to the highway. No. 6 has a dedicated garage adjacent to the property. Whilst I accept that these parking spaces would require a car to be reversed across the footway, it would not involve the same amount of manoeuvring that parking parallel to the highway within a small space would require. These are not therefore comparable to the scheme before me.
9. I conclude that the proposed development would increase the risk of collisions between users of the highway, particularly pedestrians. Consequently, it would significantly harm highway safety. It would therefore not comply with Policy SP8 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 (CLP) which seeks to improve the transport network and particularly improve the conditions for pedestrians. It would also not accord with the London Plan¹ (LP) which seeks to ensure that development does not adversely affect safety on the transport network.

Character and appearance

10. Woodside Road is a residential street characterised by houses with shallow front gardens set behind boundary walls. No. 44 forms a pair of semi-detached houses within the street which are uncharacteristically set back from the building line of neighbouring properties behind slightly deeper front gardens.
11. The formation of the vehicle crossover would require the removal of the front boundary wall and vegetation. Whilst No. 44 is slightly different due to its set back position, the front boundary wall is a consistent feature with neighbouring properties. It provides a setting for the host property, defining the edge of the appeal site with the pavement, as it does for other properties on this side of the street. There are variations in the appearance of the boundary walls, however, this type of boundary treatment is a strong characteristic feature

¹ The Spatial Development Strategy for London Consolidated with Alterations Since 2011(2016) (LP)

within the street scene, particularly on the west side of the street where the appeal property is located. The removal of the wall would interrupt this consistency, making No. 44 appear at odds with surrounding development. This would adversely affect the character and appearance of the street scene. The use of high quality materials for the construction of the parking space would not overcome this harm.

12. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with Policy DM10 of the CLP which requires, amongst other things, development to create clearly defined public and private space and for the provision of forecourt parking to not harm the character or the setting of the building.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Rachael Pipkin

Inspector