
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 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/19/3235691

133 South Norwood Hill, South Norwood, London SE25 6DD

- 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 Geoff Miller against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref: 19/02336/HSE dated 21 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is to convert part of the front garden into a driveway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on highway safety.

Reasons

3. The proposed development would be to create an off-street parking space within part of the front garden of Number 133 South Norwood Hill (No. 133). A dropped kerb would be formed.
4. The front garden to No. 133 is in an elevated position in relation to the pavement and road due to local topography. However, the garden space would be excavated to provide level access with the highway that would be sufficiently long for a car to park perpendicular to the highway. Due to the size of the proposed parking area, there would not be sufficient space for a car to easily turn within the curtilage. This is not disputed by the appellants.
5. South Norwood Hill is a classified road with a 30mph speed restriction. It is a busy urban thoroughfare which includes a number of bus routes. The appeal site is located a short distance uphill of a busy junction with Whitehorse Lane. At the time of my site visit, I observed it was heavily trafficked and vehicles were moving at speed.
6. It would not be possible for a car to both enter and exit the proposed driveway in forward gear. This would lead to cars either reversing onto or off the highway and across the pavement. There is on-street parking on this section of South Norwood Hill and drivers would be undertaking reversing manoeuvres between parked cars which, in addition to the limited visibility associated with

reversing, would further restrict visibility of any approaching vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. With the high traffic volumes along this road, this would increase the risk of collisions with other users of the highway.

7. The appellants have drawn my attention to a number of existing vehicular accesses along South Norwood Hill which I viewed during my site visit. I observed several vehicle accesses along the street but only one, Number 115, along the same stretch of the road as the appeal site. I have no details relating to the circumstances relating to that case nor to the other existing vehicle cross-overs. The appellants have also referred me to Number 158 South Norwood Hill (No. 158) where the Council granted planning permission¹ for a similar vehicular crossing in August 2018 which is located adjacent to the busy junction of Whitehorse Lane and South Norwood Hill. It appears in that case that visibility splays were provided as part of the application and found acceptable by the Council.
8. The appellants have indicated that the proposal would allow more than enough space to allow pedestrian visibility splays to comply with the Council's highway requirements. However, I have been provided with no evidence that an appropriate visibility splay could be achieved, particularly given the topography of the site and the presence of on-street parking. I am therefore unable to assess whether this would meet the required standards.
9. I conclude that the proposed development would increase the risk of collisions between users of the highway. Consequently, it would significantly harm highway safety. It would therefore conflict with Policies SP8 and DM29 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 and Policy 6.3 of the London Plan. These policies, together and amongst other things, seek to improve the transport network and require development to have a positive impact and not harm highway safety for all users of the highway network.

Other Matters

10. The appellants would be willing to install an electric vehicle charging point and measures to comply with sustainable urban drainage. These would provide environmental benefits. These are positive aspects of the scheme, however, they do not outweigh the harm to highway safety that I have identified.

Conclusion

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

Rachael Pipkin

Inspector

¹ Council Ref: 18/03274/HSE