
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2021

by S Poole BA(Hons) DipArch MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 April 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/20/3258472

121 Haling Park Road, South Croydon CR2 6NN

- 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 Nizar Baloo, St Johns Nursing Home Ltd, against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon
 - The application Ref 20/00597/FUL, dated 6 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as "demolition of a private dwelling house and development as 8 self-contained flats".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Drawing 813 H1900 L08, the rear elevation, indicates that the first and second floor terraces close to the boundary with 119 Haling Park Road would be enclosed by waist high glass balustrades. Drawing 813 H1900 L09, the side elevation, and other drawings, indicate that the terraces would be predominately enclosed by high screens. I have assessed the proposal on the basis that high screens are proposed as this is shown on the majority of the drawings.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - (i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene;
 - (ii) the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of 119 Haling Park Road, with particular regard to outlook;
 - (iii) whether the proposal would provide adequate cycle storage; and
 - (iv) the effect of the proposal on highway safety, with particular regard to visibility and parking stress.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is occupied by a detached 2-storey house with a substantial rear garden and a car parking area at the front. It is located in a section of the street that includes buildings of very varied size and appearance. To one side there is the St Johns Nursing Home, a substantial and significantly extended 2-storey locally listed building with accommodation within the roof. To the other side there is 119 Haling Park Road, which is a chalet bungalow. There are playing fields opposite the site and mature trees close to the site's side boundaries and along the road. This gives the area a relatively verdant character.
5. The proposal would comprise the demolition of the house and the erection of a 3-storey building with accommodation within the roof to provide 8 self-contained flats. The proposal would be no higher than the ridge of the neighbouring nursing home and would feature a street-facing gable and an array of hipped roof forms culminating in an area of flat roof. The roof would be a particularly dominate feature in views from the street. The combination of this, and the staggered arrangement of the frontage, would result in a cumbersome and incoherent composition that would be out of keeping and detrimental to the street scene.
6. Due to its massing and appearance, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the street scene. It therefore fails to comply with Policies SP4.1 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018) (CLP) which, amongst other matters, require high quality design that respects and enhances local character. There is also conflict with the aims of Croydon's Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) (SPD).
7. The proposal would include a refuse storage area close to the front boundary of the site. I am satisfied that adequate screening of this facility could be secured by way of a planning condition to ensure no unacceptable harm to street scene would occur over and above that described above. The proposal therefore accords with CLP Policy DM13 which states that proposals should sensitively integrate refuse and recycling facilities and ensure they are visually screened.

Living conditions

8. The flank elevation of the proposal combined with the screens on the sides of first and second floor terraces at the rear of the flats 4 and 6 would result in 3-storey development close to the boundary shared with No.119. This would extend a significant distance beyond the rear building line of No.119. Due to this rear protrusion, the height of the proposal in this area and its closeness to the boundary there would be a significant and harmful reduction in outlook from the area immediately to the rear of No.119.
9. For these reasons I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of occupiers of No.119. It therefore fails to accord with CLP Policies SP4.1 and DM10 which, amongst other matters, require development proposals to ensure that the amenity of the occupants of adjoining buildings is protected.

Cycle storage

10. The proposal would include the erection of a very utilitarian brick building for the secure storage of 15 cycles. This would be located in the rear garden a short distance from the living room of flat 1. Future residents of the building would be able to access this storage building via a rear ground floor door but would then have to either wheel their cycles through the building or along a narrow alley at the side of the building and therefore past bedroom windows.
11. This arrangement would be extremely inconvenient for future occupiers and potentially harmful to the living conditions of occupiers of the ground floor. As such it would be contrary to the Policy T5 of the London Plan (2021) which states that development proposals should help remove barriers to cycling and, in particular, cycle parking should be fit for purpose and well-located.

Highway safety

12. The appeal proposal would include 5 off-street car parking spaces at the front. Given the inadequately located cycle storage, the mix of dwelling sizes proposed and the site's poor public transport accessibility, it is probable that the proposal would result in an increase in demand for on-street car parking in the area. However, I consider it likely that this demand would be small, would not lead to a material increase in parking stress in the area, and would not therefore lead to unacceptable impacts on highway safety.
13. The car parking area would include sufficient space to enable cars to turn around within the site and therefore enter and leave the site in forward gear. This section of Haling Park Road is straight, benefits from a relatively wide pavement and there is no on-street parking on this side of the road. In addition, there would be scope to limit the height of enclosures and/or planting either side of the vehicular entrance to the site. For these reasons I am satisfied that drivers entering and leaving the site would have adequate visibility and therefore car movements generated by the proposal would not result in unacceptable impacts on highway safety.
14. I conclude in this issue that the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on highway safety. It therefore accords with CLP Policy DM29 which, amongst other matters, states that development must not have a detrimental impact on highway safety

Conclusions

15. For the reasons set out above under the first, second and third issues, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

S Poole

INSPECTOR