



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 July 2021

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 July 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/21/3267392

24 Hampton Road, Croydon CR0 2XG

- 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 Reginald Flint against the decision of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 20/03780/FUL, dated 22 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is the fitting of a spray booth inside of the warehouse and fitting of a chimney for extraction through the roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Reason for Refusal on the Council's Decision Notice makes reference to policies of the London Plan 2016, which has been superseded by the London Plan, March 2021. The Council in their further comments have provided further information on the policies of the London Plan which they still consider relevant. As such, I shall make my decision on this basis and only refer to the updated London Plan 2021 within this decision.
3. The Council's Decision Notice and Planning Officer's Report makes reference to the installation of a spray booth as being appropriate, with the only unresolved issue being the installation of a flue through the roof. I have no reason to dispute the Council's opinion with regards to considerations regarding the spray booth. As such, this letter will focus purely on the installation of the flue.

Main Issue

4. Taking the above into account, the main issue is the effect of the proposed flue upon the existing building and the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a single storey industrial unit which is the end unit in a set of three units. The buildings appear to date from the mid 20th Century, constructed of brick and have a pitched and gabled roof form with multi-paned metal glazed windows. Whilst in industrial use, the buildings maintain a lower scale form and functional appearance as a result of their height, design and relationship to the street scene. On the opposite side are rows of tightly knit Victorian terraced housing which also front Hampton Road. The dwellings each carry similar design characteristics and are two storey, brick, have a canted bay ground floor window with pitched roof and dividing parapet and large chimney stack.

6. Whilst the character of the area is one of mixed use, the industrial nature of the appeal site and adjoining buildings is quite functional and not outwardly industrial compared to the type of unit one would find on a purposely constructed industrial park. I therefore disagree with the applicant's Statement of Case (SoC) that the street scene is 'predominantly industrial in nature.' The predominant distinctiveness of the area is one that is low scale and domestic in form, character and appearance.
7. I appreciate that flues are common to industrial buildings, however, given the functional nature of the appeal building, the two flues would not be like anything around. The larger flue would project from the eaves of the roof to be 2 metres taller than the ridge. As the existing buildings have a low scale and are constructed of brick, the large metal flues are located close to the front façade next to the pavement and create a jarring and awkward appearance in terms of scale, bulk and material when set against the brick warehouse building and the dwellings opposite. The proposal would cause detriment to the character and appearance of the area which has a much more domestic than industrial form and scale.
8. I am not convinced by the applicant's comparisons between residential chimneys which are clearly proportionate in size, material and projection from the roof, to this proposal for two industrial sized metal flues which have little relationship to the particular design and character of the host building. Whilst there is a proposal to paint the flues blue to mitigate their appearance, this would be unconvincing. The flues would have a dominant form and appearance to the existing building and towards the character and appearance of the street scene. References in the applicant's SoC refer to the flue needing to be this tall in order for the spray booth to function properly. I have not been given any evidence to suggest that this is the case or whether a different configuration of the spray booth and its location within the building may result in a different type of flue or its location being required which may have a more acceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene.
9. Consequently, and in conclusion of this matter, the proposed flue would not reinforce the qualities of local character and distinctiveness and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and the locality. This would be contrary to The London Borough of Croydon Local Plan 2018 Policies SP4 (which sets a number of design criteria to ensure development respects and enhances local character and contributes positively to the public realm) and Policy DM10 (which seeks that development respect the appearance, existing materials and built features of the surrounding area). These policies are supported by the Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. As such the scheme would also conflict with Policy D3 of the London Plan which seeks a design-led approach to development.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed.

J Somers

INSPECTOR