



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 20 July 2021

by Stewart Glassar BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Wednesday 29 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/21/3269218

30 Springfield Road, Thornton Heath CR7 8DY

- 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 T Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 20/05667/FUL, dated 31 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 29 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing garage and erection of 1 bedroom detached house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Between the determination of the planning application and the appeal coming before me, the new London Plan¹ and a revised Framework² were published. The Council has subsequently indicated that Policies D3, D4, D6, T4, T5, T6 and T6.1 of the new Plan are relevant to this appeal. The views of the appellant have been sought on the new London Plan and I have referred to it in my findings. Similarly, both main parties have had an opportunity to comment on the revised Framework.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a semi-detached dwelling that fronts onto Springfield Road. As a corner plot its side elevation and rear garden also front onto Georgia Road. Both Springfield Road and Georgia Road predominantly consist of semi-detached two storey dwellings of broadly uniform designs. The properties on Georgia Road have a strongly defined front building line with limited spacing between the pairs of houses.
5. Previous extensions to the host property and its counterpart on the opposite corner, 32 Springfield Road, have reduced the openness of the junction with Georgia Road. As a result, their rear gardens form an important part of the street scene to this part of Georgia Road. Not only do these gardens provide an

¹ The London Plan 2021

² National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

important visual break between the properties in Georgia Road and those in Springfield Road but they also open up views of other long rear gardens in the area. Together with the set back position of the houses within their plots along Georgia Road and the width of the road itself, this helps to create a sense of spaciousness.

6. The proposed dwelling would be sited adjacent to 69 Georgia Road, in a similar position to an existing, single storey outbuilding that serves the host property. This outbuilding sits forward of the strong, established building line along Georgia Road. However, its height and size, together with the existing boundary treatment, ensure that it is viewed as an incidental building to the host property, with limited prominence that does not disrupt the overall character of the area.
7. In contrast, the proposal would very clearly be read within the street scene as a separate unit, with separate curtilage and entrance. It would result in significantly greater built development extending beyond the building line in Georgia Road. The proposed building would not appear as a subservient outbuilding but nor would it reflect the broadly uniform size, design and massing of the dwellings on this side of Georgia Road. Similarly, unlike other dwellings in Georgia Road that have larger rear gardens, the proposed dwelling would have an uncharacteristically small side garden, which given the building's position, would be evident within the street scene.
8. The building would add substantial built form to what is an important visual break between Georgia Road and Springfield Road. Together with the substantial reduction in the garden of the host property, the proposal would harm the area's sense of spaciousness.
9. Given my reasoning above, I find that the proposal would appear and function very differently to that of the existing single storey outbuilding. As such, it would represent an incongruous interruption of the street scene and the existing pattern of development, which would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
10. Accordingly, the proposal would be contrary to Policies SP4 and DM10 of the Local Plan³ and Policies D3, D4 and D6 of the London Plan, which amongst other things, seek to ensure that developments are of an appropriate form and design and that they relate to their surrounding area and do not diminish the public realm. I have also had regard to the Council's Design Guide⁴, which for similar reasons would not support the appeal proposal.
11. The Council has pointed me towards sustainable transport Policies T4, T5, T6 and T6.1 of the London Plan although I have not been provided with reasoning as to why they are considered relevant. I note, in any event, that the Council was previously content with the level of on-site car parking and accepted that the provision of cycle parking could be conditioned if necessary.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

12. The Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of housing and the proposal would provide a single dwelling with adequate access to services. The proposal would also accord with the Framework's support for windfall sites.

³ Croydon Local Plan (2018)

⁴ Suburban Design Guide – Supplementary Planning Document (2019)

However, given the small scale of the proposal, the provision of this additional house would attract only modest weight. The scheme would also lead to a small and time-limited economic benefit during the construction phase, which may give rise to extra local employment.

13. Conversely, I have found harm in relation to the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area. This harm is significant and as a consequence worthy of substantial weight that would outweigh the benefits associated with the proposed development.
14. The proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area in conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Stewart Glassar

INSPECTOR