

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2021

by Mrs H Nicholls FdA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/21/3276133

Barrington Lodge, 9 - 15, Morland Road, Croydon CR0 6HA

- 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 A & R Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 21/00145/FUL, dated 12 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is first floor rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the appeal application was determined, the London Plan has been adopted (March 2021) and the Government has published the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) (July 2021). Where relevant, the parties have been provided with an opportunity to comment on the implication of the policy changes. Consequently, no prejudice has occurred and the decision has been made taking into account the updated policy context and any comments received in relation to such.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area, and whether it would preserve the character and setting of locally listed buildings at Nos 7 and 9 Morland Road.

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises Nos 9, 11, 13 and 15 Morland Road, and which are conjoined as a single building to form Barrington Lodge. The building is currently used as a residential care home.
5. Nos 7 and 9 Morland Road are 'Locally Listed' buildings. No 7 is a detached dwelling, albeit only separated by a small gap from the conjoined buildings at Nos 9 – 15. It is consistent with Nos 9 – 15 in terms of its scale at two and a half storeys with a level in the roof space, gabled frontage with mock-Tudor and gothic bargeboard detailing, bay windows at first and ground floor levels and predominant brick construction. Due to the strong architectural cohesion and rhythm that the buildings create in the streetscene, they are striking and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The architectural treatment of the buildings continues around to the rear, with repetitious gables forming a strong roofline with mock Tudor detailing providing distinction to these upper parts of the building in contrast with the expanse of brick walling below. The slight interruption to this roofline with the lift and stair shafts is regrettable but not overtly harmful. The architectural cohesion is lost at the ground floor level owing to the combination of extensions added to much of the rear elevation, including a hipped roof conservatory adjoining a more substantial brick-built, flat roofed element with low parapet wall.
7. The proposal is to extend above part of the existing ground floor extension at the rear to provide additional bedrooms for the care home.
8. Relative to the rear elevation, the first floor extension would be approximately the same width as the conservatory, and would be set off the rear elevation, linked by a narrower section, presumably to avoid obscuration of existing bedroom windows. It would extend through Nos 11 and 13, and would have twin gables with a central linking section. It would be constructed of brick to match the existing walls and would also have matching slate roof covering.
9. Whilst the extension has been designed to replicate the gable detailing of the existing building, the manner in which it would appear to float above the first floor extension and partially obscure the existing strong roofline would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building. Owing to the partial obscuration of the existing gables by the proposed extension, the narrow central windows of each respective affected gable would have to be moved to off centre positions, which would appear contrived and clumsy. Overall, the proposal would appear bulky owing to its top heavy appearance and irregular siting and it would undermine a current positive attribute of the building.
10. In terms of the effects on the Locally Listed buildings, Nos 7 and 9, the proposal would not directly affect them. However, the proposal would be seen in combination with No 9 and the cohesion of the architectural integrity of the group of buildings would be undermined as a result.
11. The buildings are largely shielded from public view from the extent of Morland Road to the rear by a band of mature trees. Whilst this would limit the visibility of the proposal from the public realm, such harm does not need to be widely seen from public views to be harmful in character and design terms.
12. Consequently, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building, in conflict with Policies D1 and D4 of the London Plan (2021) and Policies SP4, DM10 and DM18 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018). These Policies seek to secure high quality development which respects and enhances the varied local character.

Other Matters

13. I note from the appellant's evidence that the COVID-19 Pandemic has had the effect of reducing the capacity of some bedrooms within the care home from double to single rooms. Despite this, limited evidence has been presented in terms of numbers of people that have had to be relocated, whether there is a waiting list for bedspaces or related effects on the operation of the business. The Council has presented counter evidence to suggest that care bedspaces in

Croydon are not in short supply, which makes it difficult to attribute more than limited weight to the promoted benefits of the proposal.

Planning balance and conclusion

14. The proposal conflicts with the development plan, when considered as a whole. There are no considerations of sufficient materiality, including the Framework, to indicate that a decision should be taken other than in accordance therewith.
15. For the reasons above, the appeal is dismissed.

Hollie Nicholls

INSPECTOR