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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2021

**by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/21/3269575**

**Saffron House, 15 Park Street, Croydon CR0 1YD**

- 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 N Siddiqui against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
  - The application Ref 19/05788/FUL, dated 9 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 November 2020.
  - The development proposed is alterations, erection of two additional storeys facing onto Park Street and one additional storey facing onto George Street with link walkway to accommodate office space.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## Reasons

3. This existing office/commercial building has a frontage onto George Street and also onto Park Street. The George Street frontage is of 3 storeys in height and faces onto a primarily retail/commercial street. The Park Street element is of 4 storeys. The appeal site is within the Central Croydon Conservation Area. The building is identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal as making a neutral contribution to the area.
4. The conservation area boundary runs along Park Street such that the northern side, including the appeal site, is within the conservation area and the southern side is not. From within Park Street, the existing building is readily visible, particularly from the west where, due to the configuration and size of neighbouring buildings, the side and front of the building are exposed. Within the conservation area, buildings to the west here are lower than the appeal building and those to the east vary in size, the nearest being lower than Saffron House and others being a similar height.
5. The proposed extension to the Park Street section would add 2 storeys with virtually no set-back from the existing elevations. Due to the prominence of the building within the conservation area here, I consider that this would have a considerable visual impact. It would result in the building being the tallest

here within the conservation area and I consider that it would appear unduly prominent and dominating, compared to other buildings on this side of the road. I acknowledge that redevelopment of the site on the opposite side of the road results in a much bigger structure; however, this is outside the conservation area and different considerations apply to sites within a conservation area. The presence of the larger structure outside the area does not compel me to look favourably on the effects of the appeal scheme within the conservation area, where the buildings are of a different scale and appearance.

6. Within George Street, the proposal would be set back by 4m from the building frontage and would be of 1 additional floor. George Street is relatively narrow and the buildings either side of the appeal site are of roughly the same height. The combination of the proposed set-back and the restricted views available of the upper parts of the buildings would mean that very little, if anything at all, of the proposal would be visible from the street level here. Taking account of the existence of other upper level elements to other buildings here, I consider that the proposal would have no unacceptable effects on the George Street frontage. In relation to the Designated View, this relates to the view along George Street from west to east culminating in the tower block known as No 1 Croydon. For the reasons stated above, I consider that there would be very little likelihood of seeing the extensions within this context and even if it were to be seen, it would be a very small element of it and within the context of a varied roof-scape. As a consequence, I consider that the Designated View would not be affected by the proposal.

### **Balance and Conclusions**

7. The Council include within the reason for refusal reference to the absence of a facility for refuse storage. In the event that the appeal had been successful, I consider that this matter could have been suitably dealt with by means of a condition.
8. The proposal would bring about additional and refurbished offices within this central location, which is a benefit of the proposal. The proposal would also lead to the removal from view of the mechanical plant at the roof level of the existing building. This must be balanced against the failure of the proposal to either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, which I assess to amount to 'less than substantial' harm. In my consideration these public benefits are insufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified. As a consequence, I conclude that the proposal conflicts with Policies DM10 and DM 18 of the Croydon Local Plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

*S T Wood*

INSPECTOR