



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 December 2022

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23rd JANUARY 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/22/3306878

84D Beulah Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon CR7 8JF

- 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 Ms Lorraine Thomas Delores Coombs against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 22/01461/FUL, dated 5 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 18 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of ground and first floor extensions to an existing single storey detached dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The parties have been advised that this appeal has been determined under the Household Appeal Service procedure because there is sufficient information available to understand the cases of each party, including the delegated report of the Planning Officer, and to assess the proposed development.

Main Issues

3. It is considered that the main issues are the effects of the proposed development on (a) the character and appearance of the surrounding area and (b) the safety of other highway users.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal property is a single storey dwelling located to the rear of buildings fronting Beulah Road. Pedestrian and cycle access from the road would remain as currently provided. The property was originally used for retail storage but was converted to residential use under the provision of permitted development (Ref 18/02304/GPDO and 20/05501/DISC) and, as such, it was not assessed against the relevant development plan policies which is the case with this appeal.
5. Also located to the rear of Beulah Road and adjacent to the property are another single storey residential property (84C Beulah Road), single storey garages/store buildings, school buildings and 2/3 storey dwellings of contemporary design (76C-76H Beulah Road).

6. The proposed development includes the erection of a first floor extension with the intention of increasing the level of accommodation to create a 2-bedroom family home. A previous application for a similar form of development was refused by the Council (Ref 21/05497/FUL). The Council has not objected to the principle of the additional accommodation but the design of the appeal scheme.
7. As claimed by the appellant, there are variations in the design of buildings adjacent to the appeal site. Some elements of the contemporary design of the proposed development reflect the adjacent buildings, including the asymmetrical roof exhibited at Nos. 76C-76H. However, and as also identified by the appellant, the appeal site is constrained in size and the existing property is contained on 3 sides by shared boundaries. These constraints have influenced the design of the resulting dwelling, in particular the need for a large dormer within the front roof slope to create the head height at first floor level.
8. By reason of the roof form and scale of the dormer, the design and bulk of the proposed development would fail to complement or respect the character and appearance of the adjoining buildings. Although there are 2-storey buildings near-by, the height, size and design of the front dormer of the resulting dwelling would be out of context and scale with the adjoining single storey buildings. Overall, the appeal scheme would be an uncharacteristic form of development in this location. Although the enlarged dwelling would not be seen from Beulah Road, it would be seen from the surrounding properties and the vehicular access route primarily serving Nos. 76C-76H.
9. For the reasons given, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and, as such, it would conflict with Policies DM10 and SP4.1 of the Croydon Local Plan (CLP) which seek high quality development that, amongst other matters, respects the appearance and built features of the surrounding area. The high quality design aspirations of these policies are echoed in Policy D3 of the London Plan (LP) and the appeal scheme would also conflict with this policy. However, LP Policy D4 appears to be directed at larger scale schemes which require design reviews rather than small scale extensions of the type proposed.

Highway Safety

10. The Council's concerns relate to the lack of dedicated off-street parking associated with the appeal scheme. CLP Policy DM30 refers to vehicular parking provision for minor development being 1 space per residential unit unless otherwise agreed by the Council. The current 1-bedroom dwelling does not have dedicated off-street car parking provision. If the current occupier owns a vehicle then it is reasonable to assume that this vehicle is parked on-street.
11. Although there are some restrictions along part of Beulah Road, it was observed during the morning site visit that unrestricted on-street parking spaces were available. If there was an additional vehicle owned by the future occupiers of the proposed development because of the second bedroom, then there would be scope to park on-street in a manner which would not give rise to a highway safety concerns.

12. The proposed 2-bedroom dwelling would be a minor development and, as such, the parking requirement would remain the same albeit there would still be off-street vehicular parking. As the appellant claims, when compared to the current situation the creation of a small family home through the addition of a further bedroom would not result in a significant increase in the demand for parking associated which would justify the need for an off-street space.
13. CLP Policy DM29 promotes sustainable travel to increase the use of public transport, cycling and walking albeit subject to there being no detrimental impact on the safety of other highway users. The property is in an area where there is a PTAL score of 3 and sufficient cycle parking could be provided on-site, secured by an appropriate condition, which would further reduce the necessity to own an additional vehicle. For the reasons already given, the absence of a dedicated off-street parking space would not have a detrimental impact on the safety of other highway users.
14. On this issue it is concluded that the lack of dedicate off-street parking associated with the proposed development would not cause unacceptable danger to the safety of other highway users and, as such, there would not be a conflict with CLP Policies DM29 and DM30.

Conclusion

15. Although unacceptable danger to the safety of other highway users would not be caused, this issue is significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the unacceptable harm caused to the character and appearance of the surrounding area by the proposed development and it is therefore concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR