



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2023

by C Butcher BSc MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/22/3305227

20 Manor Way, Purley CR8 3BH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr. Justin Owens of Silverleaf Group against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 20/06275/OUT, dated 30 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of the existing building. Erection of 4 detached houses. Provision of new access drive and associated parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal relates to an application for outline planning permission with approval sought for access, appearance, layout and scale. Where the submitted plans show landscaping, I have treated this indicatively for the purposes of my decision.

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 located in a residential area that is predominantly characterised by one or two storey detached dwellings of varying styles and sizes that are set back from the road and sit within spacious plots with large rear gardens. There are generally views between and beyond properties of mature trees and landscaping which provide a verdant appearance.
5. The proposed development would see two detached homes built on the front portion of the site, with a further two to the rear within the existing back garden. The appearance of the properties, by way of their overall design, detailing and the materials used would be sympathetic to the character of other dwellings in the vicinity.
6. However, the layout of the proposed development, with two properties to the rear of the site, within the existing back garden, would be incongruous and significantly out of keeping with the character of the immediate area. In particular, all of the existing homes in Manor Way front onto the road with a

fairly consistent building line. Providing two homes to the rear of the appeal site (plots 3 and 4) would clearly disrupt the existing rhythm of development.

7. When compared to other dwellings nearby, including smaller properties opposite the site, the development would appear cramped. Introducing a greater level of built form onto the site with two properties to the rear, and significant additional hardstanding, would be at odds with the verdant character of the immediate area, and would erode the current feeling of spaciousness. The views that currently exist beyond and around the property would also be reduced.
8. I note that the appellant has sought to draw my attention to other schemes that have received planning permission in the wider area. However, most of them do not appear to be in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. The development at 35 Manor Way is nearby and has taken place in what was a rear garden. However, the context of that scheme is quite different given that the new property still fronts onto the road and therefore helps to maintain existing character.
9. While some properties in the immediate area have outbuildings, these are all clearly subservient to the main dwellings due to their comparative size. In the case of the proposed development, the two properties to the rear, despite their smaller size, would appear as separate dwellings and, despite the topography and layout of the site, would be seen as such from the road.
10. While Chapter 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does encourage the efficient use of land, it is also clear when reading the NPPF as a whole, that development should only be permitted where it would preserve character and appearance. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to those aims of Policies SP4 and DM10 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 and Policy D3 of The London Plan (March 2021), which taken together, seek to preserve local character and respect existing development patterns.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site is located immediately adjacent to The Webb Estate & Upper Woodcote Village Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is characterised by a number of very large detached dwellings set within spacious grounds, with a significant amount of mature foliage. Collectively these elements contribute to its significance. The Conservation Area is already seen in the context of residential development, and so the proposed development would not be at odds with that. In addition, due to the presence of a number of existing mature trees and other foliage, the proposed development would not be visible when viewed from within the Conservation Area, including from the nearby properties on Silver Lane. As a result, the proposal would preserve the setting of the Conservation Area, thereby avoiding any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset.
12. Given that the proposal for four dwellings would only make a small contribution to overall housing need in the area, I have given this issue very limited weight. In addition, I note that the appellant has set out that the appeal site is in an accessible location, and also that the proposal would include various measures to ensure energy efficiency. However, these issues do not overcome the harm identified elsewhere in my decision.

13. I note that there is an existing planning permission for this site. However, the approved scheme is quite different to the one before me, in particular due to the proposed layout of the four properties, and I have set out why that would cause harm to character and appearance.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweighs the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

C Butcher

INSPECTOR