



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2023

by G Dring BA (Hons) MA MRTPI MAUDE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 FEBRUARY 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/22/3303597

1 Park Hill Road, Croydon CR0 5NA

- 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 P Leadbitter against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 22/01496/FUL, dated 8 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is new build house attached to No 1 Park Hill Road replicating the design of the host property and single storey extension to serve host dwelling (replacing conservatory).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since the refusal of the application by the Council, the Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2019 referenced in the first reason for refusal has been revoked. Accordingly, in determining the appeal I have not relied upon this document.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area; and
 - the highway network with particular regard to parking provision.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site comprises the existing dwelling and associated garden area identified as 1 Park Hill Road, located in a visually prominent corner position. The appeal site is not subject to any built environment designations. The site boundary that runs alongside Addiscombe Road is demarcated by a close boarded timber fence. The rear building line of properties in relation to Addiscombe Road, between the junctions with Park Hill Road and Park Hill Rise, are of a consistent set back from Addiscombe Road allowing for a verdant boundary and the separation of built form from the road and tram line. The side elevation of the existing dwelling that faces Park Hill Road is set back from the road behind a brick boundary wall.

5. The existing dwelling forms the end dwelling of a block which is a combination of 2 and 3 storeys in height. 1 Park Hill Road is distinctive in its relatively narrow width and mono pitch roof when viewed from Park Hill Road and from the corner with Addiscombe Road. There are three further residential blocks directly to the east, accessed from St Clair's Road, that are of similar form and design making a cohesive group that provides a consistent rhythm and pattern of built form. Beyond this group, there are a variety of different building types within the surrounding area of differing scales and design.
6. The design of the proposal responds to the height, shape and pitch of the roof of the existing dwelling. However, the existing narrow, three storey element would be largely lost from view due to the proposed proportions, massing and positioning of the proposed built form. This would alter the pattern of built form and disrupt the consistency and rhythm of this distinctive group of residential buildings. The use of matching materials would not overcome this harm.
7. The proposed positioning of built form, closer to both Addiscombe Road and Park Hill Road mean that the proposal would be at odds with the relatively consistent building lines. Whilst garden space would be retained between the proposed rear and side elevations and the roads, the built form would be considerably nearer in comparison to others in the immediate vicinity meaning that it would appear overly dominant. The proposal would also erode the existing spaciousness at this prominent corner location.
8. I note that the vegetation along the Addiscombe Road boundary and the mature tree located within the appeal site facing Park Hill Road does provide some screening. However, the existing built form is still visible on the approach along Park Hill Road and from different public vantage points from Addiscombe Road. Given the siting of the proposed dwelling which would extend built form further towards Addiscombe Road and Park Hill Road, the proposal would be more prominent and would remain visible between the vegetative screening.
9. My attention has been drawn to another development off Addiscombe Road at the junction with Brickwood Road. This appears to be the redevelopment of a medical practice rather than a residential dwelling and so is not directly comparable. In addition, five planning permissions granted by the Council in the local area have been referenced, albeit I have limited information before me as to how they compare with the proposal subject to this appeal. In any case, the planning permissions identified are not located on sites within the vicinity of the appeal site and are therefore not directly comparable to the local context of the appeal site. Consequently, I attach limited weight to these other examples.
10. The Council have not objected to the proposed single storey rear extension to the existing dwelling. Given the proposed design, limited size and height and positioning I can find no evidence before me to lead me to reach a different conclusion in relation to this aspect of the proposal. Nevertheless, concerns remain in relation to the proposed new dwelling.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area. It would conflict with policies DM10, SP4.1 and SP4.12 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 (CLP) and policies D3 and D4 of the London Plan March 2021 (TLP) which seek, amongst other things, to ensure that developments are of high quality and

respect the development pattern, layout, siting and massing and local character. The proposal would also be contrary to paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which seeks amongst other things to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and layout, are sympathetic to local character and establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

12. CLP Policy SP4.13 is referenced in the Council's first reason for refusal, however, no evidence is before me to suggest that the proposal would have an effect on heritage assets or their settings. This particular policy is therefore not relevant in this case.

Parking provision

13. The appeal site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 6b with tram and bus stops and East Croydon train station nearby. Maximum parking standards are applied by Policy T6 of the TLP. This requires that in all areas of PTAL 5-6, that developments are car free. The appeal site is located within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). The presence of the CPZ intimates that there are parking pressures within the local area. Whilst only a snapshot in time, during my site visit I observed that most on-street parking spaces located in the surrounding streets were occupied.
14. The appellant states that the proposal would be a car free development and I agree, by virtue of the appeal site's good levels of accessibility and evidence of on-street parking stress, that the proposed development should be car free in compliance with Policy T6 of the TLP. Policy DM30 of the CLP requires that one on-site car club or pool car parking space is provided for minor residential schemes unless otherwise agreed by the Council and car club providers that the site is not suitable for a car club/pool car space. The Council have not indicated that a space needs to be provided in this case but have stated that the cost for membership of a car club scheme for the occupiers of the new house should be secured for three years. Based on the evidence before me I am satisfied that this is necessary in order to comply with policy which seeks to promote sustainable travel.
15. The Council considers that a planning obligation is required to ensure that the proposed development is car free and to secure the contribution towards car club membership. No such obligation is before me and I am mindful that paragraph 010 of the National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that a negatively worded condition limiting the development that can take place until a planning obligation or other agreement has been entered into is unlikely to be appropriate in the majority of cases and that only in exceptional circumstances should such conditions be used, none of which apply to the proposal.
16. Reference is made by the appellant to an unused garage space that currently serves the existing dwelling, however this is not identified within the red line boundary of the appeal site and therefore it is not possible to take it into consideration when assessing parking provision.
17. In the absence of a suitable mechanism to ensure that the proposal would result in a car-free development and that provision is made for car club membership, future occupiers would be more likely to use private vehicles and thus the proposal is likely to increase pressure on parking in the surrounding

streets, to the detriment of the local highway network. I therefore conclude that the proposal is contrary to Policy T6 of TLP and policies SP6, DM29 and DM30 of the CLP. These policies seek, amongst other things to limit car parking provision in line with levels of public transport accessibility and connectivity, reduce carbon dioxide emissions, promote sustainable travel, reduce congestion and reduce the impact of car parking in new development.

Other Matters

18. I note that a previous application was refused by the Council and that this is a resubmitted scheme. However, be that as it may, I must deal with the proposal before me on its own merits.
19. The Council did not refuse the application on the principle of development and even if I were to agree with the Council, this would be a neutral factor that would not weigh in favour of the proposal. Whilst the proposal would result in the sub-division of an existing site and would make a contribution to the supply of housing with the addition of one unit, given the scale of the proposal such benefits would be limited in extent and would not outweigh the harm identified above.
20. Even if I were to agree with the appellant that the proposal would provide good quality accommodation of a high standard of design utilising quality materials, would make use of an underutilised site in accordance with paragraph 119 of the Framework, avoid harm to the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings and would be in close proximity to sustainable forms of transportation, these considerations would not overcome the harm I have identified above.

Conclusion

21. The proposal is contrary to the development plan as a whole, the approach in the Framework and all other relevant material considerations and the appeal is therefore dismissed.

G Dring

INSPECTOR