



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 May 2023

by L Hughes BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/22/3307278

49 Crown Lane, Norbury, Croydon, London SW16 3JE

- 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 Thierry Girard against the decision of London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 22/01664/FUL, dated 20 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is a first floor front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the streetscene, with particular regard to the preservation or enhancement of the Norwood Grove Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The site comprises a large detached 2 storey dwelling plus roof space accommodation, with a hipped roof. The front elevation incorporates a single storey flat roof extension. The proposal is to add a further storey above this, slightly stepped back and under a crown roof. The dwelling sits in a relatively large plot and dates from the interwar period, within a wider residential area.
4. The site lies within the Norwood Grove Conservation Area (CA), and so I have a statutory duty under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') (2021) also requires that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The significance of the CA is outlined in the Norwood Grove Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP).
5. This significance derives from the Grade II listed Norwood Grove Mansion within the formally landscaped Norwood Grove Park, other buildings of historic and architectural interest, and the subsequent development of spacious residential plots along roads reflecting former field boundaries. The appeal site lies within the CA's Ryecroft Road Character Area, comprising residential development dating from the Edwardian, Inter-War and Post-War periods.
6. The appellant part justifies the proposal because they consider the dwelling is undistinguished in architectural importance, with its existing front extension

being an uninspiring feature. However, the CAAMP mapping identifies the dwelling as a positive unlisted building. I find the existing front extension to be subservient and unimposing due to its single storey and limited massing. The proposed increased height and massing would unbalance the host and overwhelm its central gable feature, notwithstanding that some other features would not be affected and that matching materials would be used.

7. Furthermore, although the crown roof would to some extent reflect the main roof's pitch and height, its forward projection would significantly alter the roofscape, disrupting and dominating its predominant rhythm and proportions. This would conflict with the CAAMP, which also identifies that roofscapes make a significant contribution to the character of the Norwood Grove CA.
8. The existing front extension is not clearly visible from the public domain due to its height and the front boundary screening. In comparison, the proposal would be dominant and prominent within the wider streetscene, despite that the built form does display a variety in height, profile, and architectural detailing. The CAAMP identifies at paragraph 8.3.2 that front extensions are generally unacceptable due to the negative impact they may have on the character of individual buildings and the wider CA.
9. The dwelling is set against an adjacent higher flat roof building. However, this does not set a design precedent, as the CAAMP identifies that it detracts from the CA's special character and appearance. The proposal's impact on the streetscene is also not mitigated simply because other key elements of the CA such as highway alignments would not be affected.
10. In conclusion therefore, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host building and the streetscene, with particular regard to the lack of preservation or enhancement of the Norwood Grove CA. It would therefore conflict overall with the Croydon Local Plan (2018) Policies SP4.1, SP4.2, DM10, and DM18, and Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021). It would also conflict with the Framework Chapters 12 and 16, and guidance within the Norwood Grove CAAMP. Together they aim to achieve well designed places and preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets. They require high quality development which respects and enhances Croydon's varied local character, contributes positively to the townscape, and pays particular attention to scale, height, and massing.

Conclusion

11. I have found above that the proposal would cause harm to the character of the host building and the streetscene. With relation to the CA this would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 202 of the Framework identifies that less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. No public benefits of the scheme have been presented. I therefore give this harm considerable importance and weight.
12. In conclusion therefore, the scheme conflicts with the development plan as a whole. With no other material considerations indicating otherwise, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

L Hughes

INSPECTOR