



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2023

by L Francis BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/23/3320756

353 Morland Road, Croydon CR0 6HF

- 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 Lee Fernandez against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref 22/03463/FUL, dated 11 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2023.
 - The development proposed is demolition of the existing commercial unit and erection of a three-storey dwelling house with associated bicycle and refuse storage.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposals on:
 - The safety and efficiency of the highway network.
 - The character and appearance of the area with regards to refuse and cycle storage.

Reasons

Highway safety

3. The site is located on the corner of Morland Road and Hermitage Lane and is highly constrained due to the angle of the corner and buildings around it. There is no space for any off-street parking in this location. The site is not in a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) and it is defined as having moderate public transport accessibility with a PTAL rating of 3. Policy DM30 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 defines areas with a PTAL rating of 4 or more as having good public transport accessibility.
4. The streets to the rear of the site comprise largely 19th and 20th Century terraced housing, again with no off-street parking. Morland Road itself is a busy thoroughfare, dominated by terraced housing adjacent to the appeal site, with a school opposite and some commercial units with flats above on the other side of the Hermitage Lane junction. A church is located opposite the site on Hermitage Lane. The combination of land uses in the vicinity, along with the densely developed housing, all has the potential to put pressure on on-street parking in the area.
5. The appellant's overnight parking survey showed 85% average occupancy of on-street spaces over 2 nights, which I note the council consider to be already

at capacity. No evidence has been provided which would lead me to a different conclusion and I noted when I visited the site on a Tuesday morning that a significant proportion of on-street spaces were occupied on Hermitage Lane and the streets to the rear of the appeal site.

6. Policy T6 of the London Plan 2021 takes a restrictive approach to parking provision, requiring developments that are not well-connected by public transport to provide the minimum necessary car parking. It does not require residential development in outer London in areas of PTAL 3 or under to be car free. Given the proposed house would contain 3 bedrooms, it would be reasonable to expect that in a moderately connected area, at least 1 car would be used by future residents.
7. In terms of mitigation measures, I note the transport assessment submitted with the planning application stated that a car club vehicle was located on Caithness Walk which is nearly half an hour by foot or 8 minutes by bike. Due to the distance, I do not consider this represents a convenient alternative that would provide appropriate mitigation.
8. Increased parking demand in areas of limited on-street supply may lead to additional congestion as drivers seek spaces, or park illegally, which would be detrimental to highway safety. There is no evidence to suggest that such circumstances could be avoided by the appeal proposal.
9. My attention has been drawn to 4 other planning permissions for residential units in the area that do not have dedicated off-street parking. Having looked at the details I do not consider them directly comparable. Of those examples, 3 were determined at least 3 years ago, prior to the adoption of the London Plan 2021 and could themselves potentially be contributing to the existing demand for on-street spaces. Example D (reference 22/01973/GPDO) was for a 1 bed/1 person flat which would arguably have a lesser parking demand than the appeal site and as such is not a direct comparison.
10. The proposed development would be harmful to the safety and efficiency of the highway network due to the lack of off-street parking provision. It would therefore run contrary to London Plan policy T6 which sets out an approach to car parking provision according to public transport accessibility, and policies DM29 and DM30 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018 which, amongst other things, seek to safeguard highway safety, including ensuring that this is not compromised by the provision of car parking.

Character and appearance

11. The proposed building footprint would occupy almost the entire site, but there would be a small area to the front of the building available for refuse and cycle storage. The storage is appropriately contained and, had the appeal succeeded, an appropriately worded planning condition could have secured effective screening to avoid an overly cluttered appearance. As such the proposal in this respect would be in line with the aims of policies DM10 and DM13 which require, amongst other things, suitably designed cycle and refuse storage.

Planning Balance

12. The proposal would provide a family sized residential unit on previously developed land with good access to local facilities, and there would be no harm

to the character and appearance of the area from the proposal. However, the harm I have identified to highway safety outweighs the identified benefits.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge the appellant's comments regarding the pre application communication with the council and communication regarding subsequent amendments. However, this is a matter between the main parties and has no bearing on my consideration of the appeal.

Conclusion

14. I have found that the appeal proposal would harm the safety and efficiency of the highway network due to a lack of on-site parking leading to an increase in localised parking stress. As such it is contrary to the development plan read as a whole. The material considerations in this case do not indicate that the decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

L Francis

INSPECTOR