



Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 14 May 2024

Site visit made on 14 May 2024

by Jonathan Bore MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/24/3337939

London Croydon Hotel, 585-589 London Road, Thornton Heath, London, CR7 6AY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by London Croydon Ltd against the decision of London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref is 23/01931/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of part of the existing buildings on site, alterations to the roof of the existing hotel and construction of a four-storey rear extension to provide 52 new guestrooms, reconfiguration of the existing car parking layout, with other associated site alterations including landscaping.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site and the area.

Reasons

3. The hotel currently consists of three buildings of varied architectural styles with various modern additions. The ridge line of one of the frontage buildings would be increased to match that of its neighbour; there is no objection to that element of the scheme. To this part of the building would be added a substantial rear extension with a mansard roof. The scheme would increase the size of the hotel from 119 to 171 rooms.
4. The appeal scheme would make more intense use of urban land and provide more visitor accommodation, but there are several reasons why it is unacceptable. Firstly, the proposed mansard roof at third floor level would be the same height as the raised pitched roof of the frontage building, and its roof form, with steep sides and flat top, would appear bulkier than the roof of the main building. Secondly, the flat top of the mansard roof would form an incongruous junction with the pitched roof and its ridge. Thirdly, the stepped-back second floor of the extension together with the mansard third floor would appear top heavy above the extension's two-storey shoulder height. Finally, the extension would appear as a single building of considerable depth and uniform line and height, with regularly spaced windows; and this, despite the

degree of modelling created by the inset openings, would create a blocky form which would add to the bulk of the extension.

5. The development would therefore appear as a large, bulky extension which would dominate rather than be subservient to the main hotel building on the frontage and would be out of keeping with it. The extension would be seen through the gap between the London Croydon Hotel and the Gilroy Court Hotel, which would be widened as a result of the demolition of a side extension to the latter, and its scale, bulk and design would detract from the appearance of the site and the character of the area. It would also be directly visible from various windows and private spaces to the rear, and although these are generally not in the public realm, it is still important to ensure that design is of high quality.
6. The hotel and its neighbours have been altered, there are other mansard roofs in the vicinity, and much of the surrounding development is not of high quality, but these are not good reasons to allow a scheme which for the reasons given above would not itself be of appropriate design and bulk. The proposed tree planting on the frontage would help to soften what is currently a very hard frontage, but they would not compensate for the unacceptable design of the scheme.
7. There is an extant planning permission for the redevelopment of the whole site, including the adjacent hotels, to provide a much larger hotel in a modern style. However, any scheme involving extensions rather than redevelopment must have appropriate regard to the characteristics of the existing buildings and the surrounding area.
8. In conclusion, the development would harm the character and appearance of the site and the locality. The scheme would conflict with London Plan Policy D3 and Croydon Local Plan Policies DM10 and SP4 which taken together seek to ensure that proposals are of high quality and respect the scale, height, massing and density and appearance of the area, and that development in the grounds of an existing building is subservient to that building.

Other Matters

9. The Council did not pursue its reason for refusal in respect of drainage and flood risk. The finer details of cycle parking and urban greening could probably be dealt with through modest design changes which could be sought by condition. The submitted draft unilateral obligation under s106 would satisfactorily address various Croydon Local Plan policies. The potential economic and visitor benefits that would arise from the scheme are not in dispute. But none of these matters alters my conclusions on the main issue.

Conclusion

10. I have considered all the other matters raised, but they do not alter my conclusions. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Jonathan Bore

INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Herbert Lui	Studio Moren, Architecture
Richard Quelch	Q Square, Planning
Ignus Froneman	Cogent Heritage, Townscape
Chris Blamey	RGB Consulting, Engineers
Eva Vazaka	Space & Place Design, UGF/Landscape

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

George Clarke	Planning Officer, Croydon Council
Mary Toffi	Principal Transport Planner, Croydon Council
Georgina Betts	Deputy Team Leader, DM, Croydon Council

DOCUMENTS

Hearing statement and associated documents from the appellant
Hearing statement and associated documents from the local planning authority
Statement of common ground
Draft s106 planning obligation
List of suggested conditions

PLANS

A-025-311 P1, A-025-204 P1, A-100-301 P5, A-025-202 P1, A-025-201 P1 , A-000-300 P2, A100 350 P2, A-050-201 P1, A-110-313 P2, 2304-DR-L-002 P1, A-050-202 P0, A-110-312 P1, A-100-304 P4, A-025-250 P1, A-025-205 P1, A-050-203 P0, A-170-302 P0, A-100-305 P3, 2304-DR-L-001 P1, A-025-203 P1, A-050-204 P0, A-100-302 P5, A-170-301 P0, A-100-303 P5, A120-311 P1, A-110-311 P1, 2304-DR-L-003 P2