



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 November 2025

by **P H Wallace BSc (Hons) DipMS MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/D/25/3372948

79 South Norwood Hill, South Norwood, Croydon, London SE25 6BY

- 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 Mark Saunders against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref is 25/01653/HSE.
 - The development proposed is extension of existing dropped kerb.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the extension of an existing dropped kerb at 79 South Norwood Hill, South Norwood, Croydon, London SE25 6BY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/01653/HSE and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Numbers 01 (Site Location Plan V2), 02 (Existing Block Plan V2), 03 (Proposed Block Plan V2), 04 (Proposed Visibility Splay Block Plan V2), 05 (Existing and Proposed Plans V2), 06 (Existing Elevation and Section V2) and 07 (Proposed Elevation and Section V2).
 - 3) Prior to the first use of the access hereby permitted, details of the highway and pedestrian visibility splays to be provided within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The splays shall be provided in accordance with the approved details before the access is first brought into use and shall thereafter be retained and kept free of obstruction above a height of 0.6m.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have removed the address from the description of development provided by the appellant as that is fully set out in the main heading.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would achieve a safe and suitable access.

Reasons

4. The appeal property (No.79) is a three-storey semi-detached house within a continuous residential frontage on South Norwood Hill. The road is A-classified (A251), subject to a 30mph limit and has a largely straight alignment within the vicinity of the site. Front hard standings are a feature within this part of the street. They vary in width, with most served by dropped kerb crossovers and several being too small to permit turning on site. Immediately to the north are two recently built dwellings (Nos. 79A and 79B) with crossovers serving single/tandem spaces.
5. The frontage to No. 79 is hard-surfaced. It is wider but shallower than No. 79B and is identically surfaced. A line of flush-set pavements marks the common boundary. As there is no physical barrier between the two plots, the surfacing visually and functionally reads as a single continuous forecourt that permits unobstructed vehicle movement. On my site visit, the appeal frontage accommodated a single parked vehicle, indicating the forecourt is currently used for parking. Bins were placed against the southern boundary fence, which tapers to a modest height at the back of the footway.
6. The site directly adjoins the public footway. A streetlight is located close to the kerb mid-frontage and, to its south, tactile paving marks an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing with a central refuge. Double yellow lines extend across the frontage and past Nos. 79A and 79B and several properties to the south, beyond which restricted on-street parking is available in both directions. Whilst my site visit was only a snapshot in time (undertaken at 15:30 and 17:45), these times broadly coincide with school pick-up and the evening peak; I observed a steady but intermittent traffic flow at modest speeds and relatively limited pedestrian activity on the footway.
7. The proposal would extend the existing dropped kerb to a point just north of the streetlight to serve two side-by-side parking spaces within No. 79's forecourt, with the bin storage retained. The arrangement would not allow routine on-site forward-on/forward-off manoeuvres, contrary to the Council's Vehicle Crossover Guidelines, June 2021 (the Guidelines).
8. My site observations indicate that reversing manoeuvres are already commonplace on this street, with several neighbouring forecourts smaller than the dimensions the Guidelines seek for on-site turning. Although those accesses likely pre-date the Guidelines, I have seen no evidence to suggest that the existing pattern of frontage parking has created an inherent danger to road users. On the evidence before me, the principle of limited additional reversing would not be expected to materially worsen highway safety.
9. The Council notes that the proposed parking bays are not at 90 degrees to the footway, which could limit sightlines, and that a streetlight sits 0.7m from the crossover, short of the 1m recommended in the Guidelines. However, the alignment is only marginally shy of perpendicular and matches the arrangement at Nos 79A and 79B.
10. Manual for Streets states that the relevant measure is the visibility available where a driver pauses before entering the footway and carriageway. During my site visit and taking account of the carriageway alignment and the lack of continuous on-street parking at the frontage, I find that a driver emerging from the access

would be likely to achieve good intervisibility with pedestrians and vehicles. The streetlight would not notably affect this. There is also sufficient space for a pedestrian to pause safely clear of the proposed widened access, including users of the uncontrolled crossing, and the limited frequency of vehicle movements anticipated would not materially compromise pedestrian safety.

11. While concerns have been raised that the rearmost vehicle might enter the carriageway via the footway, the proposed crossover would correct the current arrangement, where site access is only possible across the footway. A dropped kerb would provide a smoother and safer entry and exit than the existing arrangement. The proposed side-by-side layout would operate similarly to tandem parking (only one vehicle would access the highway at a time) and would be an improvement for pedestrians using the footway.
12. The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) requires that development achieves safe and suitable access for all users and that refusal on transport grounds should be justified only where the impact on highway safety would be unacceptable or the residual cumulative impacts severe.
13. In this case, the established pattern of frontage crossovers, the lack of recorded collisions and no technical evidence to suggest otherwise, together with my site observations, including that the existing hardstanding is already used for parking with manoeuvres on and off the carriageway, indicate that the modest level and types of movements generated would not give rise to an unacceptable or severe impact. The visibility available to a driver exercising reasonable caution is sufficient in the circumstances. Consequently, and notwithstanding the identified departure from the Council's Guidelines, I conclude that the proposal would achieve a safe and suitable access and would formalise the existing pattern of parking and manoeuvring rather than create a markedly different use of the frontage. It would comply with Policy T4 of the London Plan (2021), Policies SP8, DM29 and DM30 of the Croydon Local Plan (2018), and the Framework, all of which seek to uphold highway safety.

Other Matters

14. The Council is satisfied the development would preserve the character and appearance of the area and safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. They also find it would comply with development plan policy Fire Safety requirements. I have no reason to disagree with these conclusions, although compliance with the development plan in these respects is a neutral factor.

Conditions

15. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council against the Framework and where necessary have amended their wording in the interests of effectiveness and precision.
16. In addition to the standard time condition, I have imposed a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in the interests of certainty and for the avoidance of doubt.
17. The condition suggested by the Council requiring the external surfaces of the development to match the existing building is not necessary in this instance as the materials used for the access will differ from those on the existing dwelling.

18. The Council has suggested a pre-commencement condition to secure highway visibility splays. Visibility splays are a relevant control, but the Council's proposed wording should be amended to confirm that the required splays address both vehicular and pedestrian visibility and that they relate only to land within the application site. The condition should also specify the maximum height of any obstruction within the splays and require submission of the splay details prior to the first use of the access rather than prior to commencement of development.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, I conclude the proposal would accord with the development plan as a whole and the Framework, and therefore the appeal is allowed.

PH Wallace

INSPECTOR