

Agenda Item: 6.1

06/05115/P

12/12/2006

South Norwood

Application for full planning permission

Applicant:

Howard Fairbain Project Services Ltd
439 London Road
Croydon
Surrey
CRO 3PF

Location: 15 & 15a Sylvan Hill, Upper Norwood, London, SE192QB

Description: Demolition of existing building; erection of three storey building with basement comprising 3 one bedroom, 8 two bedroom and 1 studio flats; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking

Drawing No(s): 5371-PL02RevB, PL03RevB, PL04RevB, PL05RevB, PL06RevB and PL07RevB

Recommendation: **Refuse Permission**

Reason(s) for refusal :-

1. The proposal would result in an overdevelopment of the site, out of keeping with the character of the locality and detrimental to the visual amenity of the street scene and the Church Road Conservation Area by reason of its scale, massing, design and prominent siting and would thereby conflict with Policies UD2, UD3, SP4, UC3 and H2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
2. The development would not provide a high standard of design and layout, nor would it respect the visual character of the area in which it is located and would thereby conflict with Policies SP3, UD1, UD2 and UD3 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
3. The development would be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining property by reason of its size and siting resulting in loss of light, loss of privacy, dominance and visual intrusion and would thereby conflict with Policies UD2, UD8 and H2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
4. Inadequate provision is made for car parking within the site and the development would thereby conflict with Policy T8 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).

5. The application does not offer a contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives in the vicinity to alleviate traffic generation created by the development. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies SP14 and T2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan) and Planning Guidance Note 1 on Planning Obligations.
6. The development would not provide any accessible public open space and no contribution has been offered in lieu of providing or improving public open space in the vicinity. The development would therefore be contrary to Policy RO12 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan) and Planning Guidance Note 1 on Planning Obligations.
7. The proposed vehicular access is of inadequate width to serve the development and would be contrary to Policy T11 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
8. No ecological report has been submitted with the application to justify that the proposed development would not result in the loss of nature conservation interests, thereby conflicting with Policies NC2 and NC3 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).

Ward: Upper Norwood
Lead Officer: Head of Planning Control

PLANNING COMMITTEE
1st March 2007

Application Number: 06/05115/P - 15 & 15a Sylvan Hill

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Full application for:

- Demolition of existing house.
- Erection of a three-storey building with basement, comprising 3 one bedroom, 8 two bedroom flats and 1 studio flat, formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Refuse planning permission for the reasons set out in the agenda:

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Site Description

- Occupied by a part rendered, part red brick two-storey hipped tiled roof house (consisting of numbers 15 and 15a Sylvan Hill, currently

used as a single-family house) with detached single-storey garage to the southeast and two-storey extension to the northwest. There is a single-storey rear lean-to extension located adjacent to the north western boundary. There are two driveways leading to the house. It has a substantial rear garden with mature trees in the rear garden. The house is located on Sylvan Hill, which slopes from northwest to southeast.

- Site area is 0.4acres (0.16h).

3.2 Surrounding Area

- Uses – single-family house to the southeast and converted flats to the northwest, purpose built block of flats opposite, backs onto terraced houses on The Dell.
- Form – Extended two-storey part tile-hung part red brick house with part gable, part flat roof adjoins to the southeast. Converted two and a half storey Victorian houses adjoin to the northwest, three to five storey purpose built flats with hipped roof opposite.

3.3 Designations

- Church Road Conservation Area.
- Within an area of local park deficiency.

3.4 Relevant history

06/05132 – Demolition of the existing building. Conservation Area Consent refused 6th February 2007 for the following reason:

- 1) The proposal would result in the demolition of a building within the Church Road, Upper Norwood Conservation Area which would result in a cleared site detrimental to the character and appearance of the Area. In the absence of an appropriate permitted scheme for redevelopment of the property the proposal would be contrary to Policy UC2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).

06/03053 – Demolition of existing building: erection of three storey building with basement comprising 7 two bedroom flats and 6 one bedroom flats; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking. Refused on 13th October 2006 for the following reasons:

- 1) The proposal would result in an over-development of the site, out of keeping with the character of the locality and detrimental to the visual amenity of the street scene and the Church Road Conservation Area by reason of its scale, massing, design and prominent siting and would thereby conflict with Policies UD2, UD3, SP4, UC3 and H2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).

- 2) The development would not provide a high standard of design and layout, nor would it respect the visual character of the area in which it is located and would thereby conflict with Policies SP3, UD1, UD2 and UD3 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
- 3) The development would be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining property by reason of its size and siting, resulting in loss of light, loss of privacy, dominance and visual intrusion and would thereby conflict with Policies UD2, UD8 and H2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
- 4) Inadequate provision is made for car parking within the site and the development would thereby conflict with Policy T8 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
- 5) The application does not offer a contribution towards sustainable transport initiatives in the vicinity to alleviate traffic generation created by the development. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies SP14 and T2 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan) and Planning Guidance Note 1 on Planning Obligations.
- 6) The development would not provide any accessible public open space and no contribution has been offered in lieu of providing or improving public open space in the vicinity. The development would therefore be contrary to Policy RO12 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan) and Planning Guidance Note 1 on Planning Obligations.
- 7) The proposed vehicular access is of inadequate width to serve the development and would be contrary to Policy T11 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).
- 8) No ecological report has been submitted with the application to justify that the proposed development would not result in the loss of nature conservation interests, thereby conflicting with Policies NC2 and NC3 of the Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (The Croydon Plan).

3.5 Proposal

Full permission is sought for:

- Demolition of the existing pair of semi-detached houses and low level front boundary wall.
- The plans show a Victorian style building with bay windows and hipped roof features. The street elevation shows the building to be three storeys, with the upper floor accommodated in the roofspace on the

south eastern side of the building. Also on this side of the building, but only apparent from the rear and the side facing number 19 Sylvan Hill, is a basement area.

- The proposed building would measure 18.9 metres wide and would vary in depth from 11.4 metres to 16.9 metres. The height of the building steps down as the land level lowers and it has a maximum height of 11.3 metres.
- Accommodation would be arranged over four floors to provide 12 flats. In the basement would be a one bedroom flat and a two bedroom flat. On the ground floor there would be 2 one bedroom flats and 2 two bedroom flats. The first floor would contain 3 two bedroom flats and at second floor level there would be 2 two bedroom flats and a studio flat.
- Two balconies are proposed at ground floor level and one at first floor level. The balconies can be achieved at ground floor level as they would be situated above a sunken terrace proposed for the basement flats.
- The materials are specified as being London Stock brickwork and imitation slate. Sash windows are shown on the elevations with stone cills.
- Two trees are proposed to be removed in the front garden. Those to the rear would be retained.
- 7 Car parking spaces are proposed to the front of the site (of which one is proposed to be a disabled car parking space), which would be accessed via a centrally located vehicular access and soft landscaping is proposed to the front of the parking area and side boundary with number 13 Sylvan Hill.
- A flat roof refuse store is proposed in the front garden near the boundary with number 13 Sylvan Hill.
- 13 secured and covered cycle parking spaces have been provided to the rear of the site.
- A design and access statement and EcoHomes preliminary report has been submitted with the application.

4 PLANNING POLICIES:

- Croydon Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan): SP1, UC2, UD2, UD3, UD4, UD8, SP16, SP18 SP20, SP22, T8, T14, RO15, EP23, UC8, UC12, EP5, H2, H11 and H14.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Advertised: press / site notice as a major application

5.2 92 adjacent occupiers notified 17 replies.

Main grounds of objection:

- 1) Mass is much larger in scale than existing building.
- 2) Loss of light.

- 3) Loss of outlook.
- 4) Overlooking.
- 5) Loss of privacy and visual intrusion.
- 6) Proximity to neighbouring properties.
- 7) Detrimental impact on the character of the area.
- 8) Extends much further back into the plot.
- 9) Design has little regard for the surrounding architectural styles.
- 10) Removal of 2 trees at front of site.
- 11) Unclear what will happen to the existing beech hedge at the front of the site – trees and greenery are fundamental to the character of this conservation area.
- 12) Overshadowing to neighbouring properties.
- 13) Increased noise and disturbance.
- 14) Additional odours from cooking facilities.
- 15) The neighbourhood is prone to subsidence.
- 16) Density too high.
- 17) Inadequate daylight to basement flats.
- 18) Insufficient parking.
- 19) Unnecessary demolition and disposal of waste material will pollute the environment.
- 20) Impact on wildlife.
- 21) Detrimental impact on streetscene.
- 22) Overdevelopment of the site.
- 23) Increase in traffic.
- 24) Increased risk of flooding from increased paved areas.
- 25) Additional burden on water supplies and sewerage.
- 26) Only cosmetic changes since the previous application.
- 27) Overbearing impact on neighbouring property.
- 28) Inadequate separation to neighbouring properties.
- 29) Materials inconsistent with neighbouring properties.
- 30) Loss of family housing.

5.3 The North Croydon Conservation Area Advisory Panel objects to the application:

- Proposals are almost identical to the previous application that has been refused.
- The proposed building is too large and too high for this location and context.
- The building, from the street frontage appears to be a very large family residence but without the surrounding space expected of such a unit, particularly between buildings. Being on three floors the height does not respect the stepping down characteristic of the buildings on this side of the road reflecting the general slope of the land. Even by reducing the height by placing the third floor rooms in the roof space at the south east end of the building the relationship with number 19 is awkward and unsatisfactory.

- The style of the building and the adoption of the details of no.s 9, 11 & 13 would possibly be satisfactory on a building of the same size as these but on a building as large and of the form as proposed fails to produce an acceptable design as can be clearly seen by the north east elevation and particularly the south east and north west elevations which have an institutional appearance.
- The proposals extend far too deep into the site and the extent of the projection to the rear of the property in relation to the rear walls of the adjoining properties will have a detrimental effect on the enjoyment of no.s 13 & 19.
- Several comments in the Design Statement are in our opinion, wrong and could be misleading.
- The proposals would not enhance the conservation area.
- Only 2 of the 4 windows shown at basement level on the North East elevation serve habitable rooms.

5.4 The Norwood Society objects to the application:

- Design is below the standard acceptable for a new building in a conservation area. It is a pale Victorian pastiche.
- Does not preserve or enhance the area,
- Conversion of front garden to car parking space is detrimental to the appearance of the area.
- Proposed development is too large for the site and looms over the detached family house at number 19.
- Not in tune with the 3 Victorian detached villas at no.s 9, 11 & 13 and would have a very damaging effect on the historically mixed character of that side of the hill.
- Density too high.
- An area shown as garden area on the plans has been subject to a separate land purchase.
- Overdevelopment of the site.

5.5 Auckland Ridge Residents Association objects to the application:

- Does not make a positive contribution to the conservation area.
- Over intensification of the use.
- Application form makes no mention of the basement flat.
- Inadequate parking leading to more cars parking on Sylvan Hill.
- Parking congestion on Sylvan Hill at peak times.
- Loss of amenity from the destruction of the front garden.
- Will dominate and take over the streetscene.
- Will cause noise and disturbance to adjoining residents.

5.6 The Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor recommends that the application needs to be reviewed on the following basis:

- Secured By Design principles should be applied during both the design and construction phases.
- Lighting of the development, in particular streets, paths and car parking areas are well lit to improve visibility in hours of darkness.
- A clear definition of defensible space should be provided whilst maintaining good natural surveillance throughout the development.
- There is no supporting statement re: safety and security with this application. Serious consideration must be given to these issues. Request that the applicant shows in greater detail how they have addressed the seven attributes of crime prevention defined in the Home Office publication 'Safer Places'.
- The main residential access doors should be controlled by a video access control system in the secure lobby area. A tradesman switch is not acceptable. If the letterboxes are in the foyer, there should be a sterile area between the main doors and inner foyer.
- 2m secure perimeter fencing should be fitted to enclose the private areas and gardens. A clear definition of defensible space should be provided. The fencing from the side of the building to the perimeter should be similarly equipped.
- The secure cycle area should be robust, well lit and in a prominent position, not tucked away out of view. The stands used should allow the cycle to be secured at two chassis points. If you decide to use a lock it must be Secure By Design standard, if you decide to use a padlock & hasp the fitting must be high security standard and comply with 'sold secure'.

5.7 Referral from Councillor Sue Bennett:

- Overdevelopment.
- Detrimental to the streetscene.
- Loss of privacy and light to adjoining property.

5.8 Andrew Pelling MP has objected on the following grounds:

- Density of development.
- The need for family housing and not flats.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

The Principle of Development.

- 6.1 The existing pair of semi-detached houses are located within the Church Road Conservation Area, however they are not locally listed or of architectural importance. In principle the demolition of the pair of semis does not raise any issues; however the acceptability of demolition would

depend on a well detailed proposal which would respect the character and appearance of the Church Road Conservation Area.

- 6.2 Policy H2 of the Croydon Plan state that the Council will permit housing development within the existing built up area provided this does not conflict with the aim of respecting the character of residential areas and there is no loss of other protected uses.
- 6.3 Policies RO15 of the UDP and the draft Croydon Plan relates to local open space in residential schemes. The application site is located within an area of local park deficiency. As such, the Council would expect a commuted payment for the enhancement of a nearby local park. The application does not include a contribution towards local open land.

Townscape issues

- 6.4 The applicant in support of the application states the building has been designed to follow the Victorian style of the buildings adjoining to the northwest, all of which consist of two-storey dwellings with accommodation in the roof. Some of these properties have been extended with pitched roof two-storey side extensions. These houses are located on a hill sloping from northwest to southeast and there is a difference in ridge heights of between 0.5m-0.7m.
- 6.5 The proposed three storey building, extending almost the full width of the site over four floors, set approximately 0.5m below the ridge height of no.13 Sylvan Hill would not relate satisfactorily to the adjacent houses, in either scale or form, being much wider and having a greater bulk. The property would appear dominant in the street in terms of its scale, bulk, massing and height. In comparison to application 06/03053/P, the set down in height from no.13 is only 0.2m.
- 6.6 This is accentuated by the scale of the smaller two-storey modern house, with accommodation over the garage located to the southeast of the application site (no.19). Furthermore, the staggered rear of the building would extend well beyond the neighbouring properties, where a fairly consistent building line exists. The depth of the building has been reduced slightly, compared to 06/03053/P, although not to a significant extent to address concerns.
- 6.7 This would result in a dominant building where the bulk and massing of the proposed building would have an overbearing impact on the adjoining properties.
- 6.8 The gable-ended features evident on the front elevation of 06/03053/P have been hipped back into the main roof. This is an improvement, but the design of the building still lacks the architectural detailing, evident elsewhere in Sylvan Hill, making the proposed building appear as a poor

pastiche and would not be in keeping with the detailing of these properties to the northeast.

- 6.9 The layout of the site shows some landscaping to the car parking area to the front. However, the narrow strip of planting along the front boundary would be insufficient to screen the car parking area from the street. This is of particular concern given the location of the site within a Conservation Area. The loss of the two trees in the front garden area does not raise any objection as they are not worthy of inclusion in a new Tree Preservation Order.

Amenities of adjoining and nearby occupiers

- 6.10 The length of the proposed building has been reduced when compared to 06/03053/P. However, this reduction has been the section of the building adjacent to no.13 and in the central portion of the building. The length of the building is only 0.1m shorter adjacent to the boundary with no.19 Sylvan Hill. In terms of changes to the height of the proposed building in comparison to 06/03053/P, adjacent to no.13 it has been reduced in height by approximately 1 metre, but steps back up again after a short distance. In relation to the boundary with no.19, the height is comparable.
- 6.11 Given the lower height of the existing building on the site, it is considered that this would be a significant increase in height and projection of building mass in relation to the boundaries. The proposed building would appear dominant when viewed from habitable rooms and the gardens of neighbouring properties.
- 6.12 The bulk of the new building would overshadow neighbouring properties and their gardens. The height of the new building would be considerably higher than the house it replaces and would have a detrimental impact in terms of loss of outlook to the bedroom dormer window at no.13. The height of the building and the proximity to the boundary would result in an overbearing impact on no.19. There are windows proposed in both side elevations which would serve bedrooms, kitchens, en-suite bathrooms and lounge areas of flats. These overlook the adjoining properties' gardens and some of the flats in number 13's habitable rooms.

Amenities of future occupiers

- 6.13 All flats would be of adequate size and layout. There would be adequate outlook, sun and daylight to all habitable rooms. There would be adequate communal amenity space to the rear of the property.

Highways and parking

- 6.14 The site is located within an area with a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) rating of 2, as indicated on maps produced by Transport for

London. The site is therefore considered poorly accessible to public transport links.

- 6.15 A single vehicular access is proposed at 3.3m wide which is the same width as the previous application. This is considered to be too narrow. A width of 3.5m is considered adequate to allow a car to pass a pedestrian/cyclist, whereas a crossover width of 4.1m is sufficient for two cars to pass each other in opposite direction. Considering the number of units that the car park will serve, a crossover width of 4.1m would be better suited to serve the proposal. Appropriate pedestrian visibility splays are achievable on the site.
- 6.16 The car parking standards requires a maximum of 1 space to be provided per flat, equating to a total of 12 spaces. The applicant has referred to recent permissions which related to the conversion of some of the Victorian houses adjoining to the northwest of the site where lower levels of parking provision have been permitted. The 7 parking spaces proposed are considered insufficient in relation to the low PTAL rating. The quantity of parking provision is therefore not considered adequate and that a higher provision should apply to a development of this nature. Cycle parking is proposed for 13 cycles which is satisfactory.

Contributions

- 6.17 Planning Guidance Note 1 recommends contributions towards sustainable transport for residential developments of more than 10 units. No indication has been given that this would be provided (which would have been in the region of £7,300).
- 6.18 Policy RO15 of the Replacement Croydon Plan relates to local open space in residential schemes. The application site is located within an area of local park deficiency. As such, the Council would expect a commuted payment for the enhancement of a nearby local park. The application does not include a contribution towards local open land. This contribution was in the region of £15,251 for the previous refused application. No indication has been given that a contribution would be provided.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The proposal would attain:
- EcoHomes “excellent” pre-assessment rating is achievable which is acceptable.
 - Size, location and infrastructure to support the technology would be required to achieve the 10% renewable energy requirement.

7.2 No ecological report has been submitted with the application to justify that the proposed development would not result in the loss of nature conservation interests, in particular stag beetles and bats that residents have seen on or around the site.

8. EQUALITIES CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 1 disabled car parking space is proposed.
Level Access would be secured under the Building Regulations.

Case Officer: Helen Furnell
Background Documents: Seventeen letters of objection
Letter from North Croydon Conservation Advisory Panel
Letter from Norwood Society
Letter from Auckland Ridge Residents Association
Letter from the Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor
Contact Officer: Mr. P. Mills 020 8760 5419