

Agenda Item: 6.13

06/00413/P

24/03/2006

South Norwood

Application for full planning permission

Agent:
Cooper Smith
1 Belvedere Road
Upper Norwood
London
SE19 2HJ

Applicant:
Norwood Heights Ltd

Location: 4 Sylvan Road, Upper Norwood, London

Description: Demolition of annex; alterations; conversion to form 8 two bedroom and 7 one bedroom flats; erection of three/four storey front and side extensions; formation of vehicular access and provision of associated parking

Drawing No(s): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Recommendation: Refuse Permission

Reason(s) for refusal :-

1. The extension would detract from the appearance of the locally listed building, the visual amenities of the street scene and the character of the Church Road Conservation Area by reason of its size, siting, dominance, design and appearance and would thereby conflict with Policies SP1, BE1, H7, UC3 and UC11 of the Unitary Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance Note No 2 on "Residential Extensions" and Policy UD2, UC4 and UC12 of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan)
2. The proposed development would not preserve or enhance the setting of the adjacent Listed Building and would thereby conflict with Policy UC9 of the Unitary Development Plan and Policy UC8 of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan)
3. The development would be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of No. 12 Kitley Gardens by reason of overlooking and would thereby conflict with Policy BE17 of the Unitary Development Plan and Policy UD6 of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan)
4. The siting of the access road would be detrimental to the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers by reason of noise and general disturbance and would thereby conflict with Policies BE10 and EP11 of the Unitary Development Plan and Policies UD11 and EP5 of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan)
5. The design and layout of the access road and parking areas would not be attractive, safe or appropriate to the development and would thereby conflict with

erection of a three/four storey front and side extension; formation of vehicular access and associated parking.

2. RECOMMENDATION

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

3. BACKGROUND

(a) Site Description

- 3.1 The site lies on the south western side of Sylvan Road. The site is rectangular in shape and has a frontage of 25m and a depth of between 46m and 50m. The site has an area of 0.13ha (0.32acres). The land levels fall to the rear of the site.
- 3.2 The site is occupied by a three storey detached property with further accommodation in the roof space and basement. Although the property is presently unoccupied, it appears that the building was last in use as 3 self contained flats.
- 3.3 At the north western flank there is an annex with accommodation in the roofspace. There is a first floor level link which connects the accommodation space over the annex to the main building. At the south eastern flank a single storey attached garage exists with a fire escape over the structure.
- 3.4 There is a substantial garden area to the rear of the site which contains a number of mature trees and shrubs. All trees located within the site are subject to Conservation Area designation.
- 3.5 To the rear of the site lies an additional garden area which currently forms part of the site but has not been included within the current application.
- 3.6 The property is included on the Council's Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest. Furthermore the site lies within the Church Road Conservation Area. The land to the North West of the site is also located within the Conservation Area.
- 3.7 To the north west of the site lies St. John's Church and the associated vicarage and parish hall which are designated as a Grade II Listed Buildings. To the south east and north east of the site lie 2 – 4 storey purpose built blocks of flats. In addition, two storey semi detached properties lie to the south western side of the site along Auckland Road.

(b) Relevant Planning History

- 3.8 72-1109 – In May 1972, planning permission was granted for the erection of a double garage with a store and room over. This is the annex which is to be demolished.

(c) Proposal

- 3.9 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the annex and garage; alterations; conversion to form 8 two bedroom and 7 one bedroom flats; erection of a three/four storey front and side extension; formation of vehicular access and associated parking.

- 3.10 The proposed extension would have a width of 9.3m and a maximum depth of 16.1m. It would be sited 14.5m from the Sylvan Road frontage, 19m from the rear boundary and between 0.5m and 2.5m from the north western boundary. The building would rise to between 3 and 4 storeys and would have an overall height of 11.8m.
- 3.11 The plans show that the development (including the existing building and the proposed extension) would comprise one and two bedroom flats that range between 45m² and 55.5m² in size. The main living areas of the flats would have outlooks onto Sylvan Road and the rear of the site. Flats A and C would have private garden space. In addition the scheme proposes an area of communal amenity space to the rear of the site with dimensions of 14.5m in depth and 8.5m in width.
- 3.12 A traditional approach has been adopted to the design of the scheme. The materials primarily include red bricks to match the existing building, artificial stone heads and cills to the window and door openings and Riverdale artificial slates to the roof to match that of the existing building.
- 3.13 The plans show that there would be 5 car parking spaces to the front of the site and 10 car parking spaces to the rear of the site, which would be accessed via the proposed vehicular access along the south eastern boundary.
- 3.14 The applicant has indicated the provision of 9 secured and covered cycle parking spaces to the rear of the site.
- 3.15 The proposal also incorporates a number of alterations to the existing property. These include amendments to the main entrance and porch area, insertion of windows in the south eastern elevation, the reinstatement of the chimney stack, alterations to the existing light well and new dormer extension in the rear roof slope to replace the existing rooflight.
- 3.16 A design statement and environmental performance statement has been submitted with the application.

4. PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.1 The policies of the Unitary Development Plan, which are of relevance to this application, are SP1, BE1, BE2, BE3, BE10, BE11, BE12, BE13, BE14, BE16, BE17, BE18, BE23, EP10, H4, H7,H11, H18, UC3, UC9, UC11, T23 and T46.
- 4.2 The policies of the Second Deposit Draft Replacement Unitary Development Plan (the Croydon Plan), including the Proposed Modifications which are of relevance to this application are SP1, UD1(A), UD2(A), UD4, UD5(A), UD6, UD11, UD13, SP16, SP20, SP22, T30(A), T43(A), RO15, EP23, UC8(A), UC12, UC4(A), EP5, H6(A), H13(A) and UD18.
- 4.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance Note No. 2 on Residential Extensions.
- 4.4 Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance Note No. 7 on Residential Conversions.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 The application has been advertised in the press as a major application. In addition 115 occupiers in the surrounding area have been notified. Ten letters of objection have been received, commenting as follows:

- a) Reduce the amenities of the surrounding properties;
- b) Too high density;
- c) Increase in traffic problems;
- d) Concerns relating to the access in terms of the effect on the shared boundary;
- e) Noise and disturbance;
- f) Loss of privacy;
- g) Increased risk of accidents;
- h) Location of refuse bins will cause noise and disturbance;
- i) The wall beside the footpath flanking the front garden of No. 4 Sylvan Road is unlikely to be able to support the proposed access;
- j) Insufficient parking provision;
- k) Increase in pollution;
- l) The proposed driveway would be higher than the garden which would run alongside the houses;
- m) Result in subsidence;
- n) Loss of trees; and
- o) Contribute to the water shortage in the area.

5.2 A letter of objection has been received from the Norwood Society, commenting as follows:

- a) The existing house retains its original architectural features and general character and complements the setting of the church itself
- b) The extension is so large it would dominate the existing building
- c) The existing tower like structure that would split the existing façade in two would destroy the fine porch and other original features
- d) Loss of the front and rear gardens to hard standing for the parking of vehicles

5.3 The North Croydon Conservation Area Advisory Panel have objected to the application on the following grounds:

- a) The main extension is far too large and too close to the Church site reducing the quality of the listed building.
- b) The Listed building would be impaired by the extent and the height of the extension, particularly when viewed from the south west.
- c) The main extension is not subservient to the main building, thus creating a mixed proportion building with little cohesion.
- d) The original building is much better when left to stand on its own.
- e) The proposed changes to the entrance and floors immediately above destroy the original concept, character and design of the existing building. The new entrance is not appropriate scale or style for a building of the size proposed.
- f) Little attempt has been made to reflect or respect the style, proportions or detailing of the original building. For example the new roof details should be influenced by the detailing of the original building and account should be taken of the existing brick work details, string courses and window heads and cills.

- g) The original building has undergone several inappropriate and unsympathetic alterations and extensions in the past but nevertheless a considerable amount is still visible. Proposed works should concentrate on renovation
- h) The proposed removal of the steel staircase on the north west façade and the demolition of the garages on this side of the building is welcome as is the removal of the extension to the original building between it and the annex.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The principal issues to be considered are:

- (1) The acceptability of the proposed development within the context of the policies of the UDP and draft Croydon Plan
- (2) The effect of the proposal on:
 - (a) The effect on the character of the locally listed building, the visual amenity of the street scene, the setting of the Grade II listed building and the character of the Church Road Conservation Area;
 - (b) Trees on site;
 - (c) The amenities and privacy of the occupiers of adjoining properties;
 - (d) The amenities of the future residential occupiers, and
 - (e) Parking, traffic and highway conditions in the locality.

The acceptability of the proposed use

6.2 There is no objection to the demolition of the existing garage or annex. They do not form a part of the original building and are not considered to be of architectural importance.

6.3 Policy H4 of the UDP and Policy H6 of the draft Croydon Plan state that the Council will permit the conversion of a dwelling to two or more dwellings provided that the dwellings are self contained and provide satisfactory accommodation. The principle of the conversion of the dwelling has previously been agreed, therefore in principle there is no objection to the conversion of the existing building.

6.4 This proposal being in excess of 14 units involves the requirement for affordable housing expressed in Policy SP32 and H18 of the UDP and Policies SP24 and H13 of the draft Croydon Plan and SPG Note No. 6 on Affordable Housing. A requirement of 40% is normally sought for a development of this size. The applicant has not provided any information indicating that 40% of the units would be provided for affordable housing.

6.5 Policies RO15 of the UDP and the draft Croydon Plan relates to local open space in residential schemes. In area not deficient in local parks, such as the application site, 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 (which would have been in the region of £8,798).

Character and Appearance

6.6 Supplementary Planning Guidance Note No. 2 on Residential Extensions states that extensions to the side of properties should respect the character of the street and in particular the architectural rhythm of houses and the spaces between them. It continues to state that the extension should be designed to appear subordinate to the original house and this can only be achieved by setting extensions back from the main front wall of the house so that they can become subordinate elements of the street elevation. It is clear from the plans that the proposed extension would not be subservient to the original building and would be overly dominant in terms of its scale, bulk, massing and height. Essentially the extension considerably diminishes the impact of the existing building which should remain prominent. It would therefore have a detrimental effect on the character of the existing locally listed building, the visual amenity of the streetscene and the character of the conservation area.

6.7 In addition, it is considered that the style, proportions and detailing of the extension do not reflect the existing building sufficiently.

6.8 Furthermore, it is considered that the scale, bulk and massing of the proposed extension, in such close proximity to St. John's Church would have an overbearing impact on the setting of the Grade II listed building.

6.9 The proposed alterations to the building such as the infill between the front gables to form a turret feature would not sit well against the existing fabric of the building. The lead covered roof would be insensitive to the design of the existing roof and would be detrimental to the character of the existing property. This alteration also results in the loss of a decorative porch which is considered to be a valuable feature of the building.

6.10 It is not considered that the proposed dormer extension in the rear roof slope, new windows in the south eastern elevation, reinstatement to the chimney stack or the alterations to the lightwell would have a detrimental effect on the character of the building, the visual amenity of the streetscene or the character of the conservation area.

6.11 The plans show parking areas, refuse storage and cycle parking to the front of the building. It is considered that this would be visually intrusive and would detract from the character of the locally listed building and the appearance Conservation Area.

Trees

6.12 Although the footprint of the extension is similar to that of the existing annex building, the slight increase to the rear would result in the loss of mature Horse Chestnut tree. The tree is considered to be a prominent specimen in the locale and retention should be encouraged. It is therefore considered that the loss of a tree would be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area.

The amenities of the adjoining occupiers

6.12 The application includes the insertion of windows in the south western elevation of the existing property to serve bedrooms to Flats O, K, G and C. Although there is no objection to the insertion of the windows, it would result in overlooking into the gardens of 12 Kitley Gardens, which would be unacceptable.

6.13 There would be no effect to the amenities of St. John's Church and associated buildings due to the separation between the proposed extension and the church.

- 6.14 It is considered that the proposed vehicular access adjoining the south eastern boundary would result in an increase in noise and disturbance to the properties adjacent to the site at Kitley Gardens due to the close proximity to the access and the increase in vehicular movement.

Standard of accommodation

- 6.15 SPG 7 on Residential Conversions requires that flats with two habitable rooms should have a gross internal area of at least 45m² and flats with three or more habitable rooms should have a gross internal area 55m². It is clear from the plans that all of the proposed units would meet the above requirements with a satisfactory layout and would thereby provide a satisfactory living space for future occupiers.
- 6.16 Policy H11 of the Unitary Development Plan and Policy UD6 of the draft Croydon Plan require that adequate amenity space be provided for flatted developments. The plans indicate that there would be an area of communal amenity space to the rear of the site. In addition Flat A and C would have private garden spaces directly accessed via the living spaces. It is considered that this provision would be sufficient to meet the needs of the future occupiers of the flats.

Parking and Highway Implications

- 6.17 The site is shown to be located in an area with a PTAL accessibility rating of 1a which is considered poorly accessible to public transport links. The car parking standards described in Appendix 2 in the draft Croydon Plan require a maximum of 1 car parking space to be provided per flat, equating to a total of 15 spaces. The plans show the provision of 15 spaces which is satisfactory and in accordance with the standards.
- 6.18 The site currently has two access points onto Sylvan Road. The applicant intends to close one access and modify the remaining access in order to serve the proposal. The plans show a vehicle crossover width of 3m, with a driveway narrowing to approximately 2.6m for a distance of 11m before opening up to the proposed parking area to the rear. The access is of insufficient width to allow vehicles to pass one another. Therefore it is considered that the proposed vehicular access would interfere with the movement and safety of the public highway.
- 6.19 SPG 10 states that there should at least one space provided for disabled parking in a scheme of this size. The information and plans submitted do not indicate the provision of a disabled parking space.
- 6.20 Policy T14 of the Croydon Plan requires sufficient storage for 1 cycle per flat. The applicant has specified that there would be 9 cycle spaces, which is considered to be unacceptable.
- 6.21 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 £10, 500).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 An environmental performance statement has been submitted with the application. However the issues of Eco Homes and provision of 10% renewable energy have not been fully addressed.

8. EQUALITIES CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Level access would be provided to the proposed flats. No disabled parking space has been provided.

Case Officer: Stacey Boot

Background Documents: Ten letters of objection
Letter from North Croydon Conservation Advisory Panel
Letter from Norwood Society

Contact Officer: Phil Mills 020 8760 5419