

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Ground Floor, R/O 244 High Street, Croydon, CRO

Proposal: Alteration and Conversion of ground floor to provide 2 units (1x1 bedroom and 1x2 bedroom) C1 apartment utilising associated integrated refuse area and cycle storage.

Author:

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(Owner of Sterling Rose Homes and former Local Authority Planner)

Submitted to:

LB Croydon

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Author Background

Mr Miheer Mehta is an award winning Property Entrepreneur with over 20 years of Town Planning and Development experience within Greater London. He was a former Local Authority Planner with around 8 years of Local Government experience as a Development Management Senior Principal Planner with delegated authority at various London Boroughs, which include the London Boroughs of Lewisham, Camden and Ealing from 2006 to 2014. During his time within Local Authority, he has approved in excess of 2,000 homes across London and therefore holds a very expert understanding of Local Government matters.

Subsequent to his experience in Local Authority, he went on to create a planning gain company which sought to unlock primarily, brownfield development within Town Centres and Suburban Area within Greater London and to provide faster planning solutions across sites to provide mixed-use housing and a range of new housing for first time buyers. In 2015, he created Sterling Rose Homes and has led the business to gain planning consent for in excess of 2,500 homes since 2015 and has built more than 1000 new homes for first time buyers, young professionals and families during this time. He has also created a significant build to rent portfolio for working professionals within high PTAL locations around London and fully understands the needs of all aspects of the planning, construction and development process to also include the demands of occupiers too. He currently houses in excess of 500 tenants.

With his wealth of knowledge and expertise, he continues to understand and seek positive outcomes, working with all required stakeholders to gain new housing outcomes across Greater London at pace. He personally is involved in every element of the design process and pays meticulous care and attention to the appearance and layout of each new development.

**Yours Sincerely,
Miheer Mehta**

Photos of recent developments by Sterling Rose Homes



Site & Surrounding

The current site is a 2-storey building with 2 existing flats to the first floor. The ground floor is vacant.

244 High Street sits to the rear of a vibrant area in central Croydon which is home to a lot of restaurants/bars as well as being a short 3-minute tram commute to East Croydon Station and a short walk to the Whitgift centre and other metropolitan sized shops in central Croydon, this makes the location the ideal place for a residential development.

The location of 244 High Street has a PTAL level of 6a which shows excellent transport links around the proposed development.

Relevant Planning History

Various, however, no previous history for a C1 use.

Background

This statement is submitted in support of an application to convert part of this building, with the alteration and conversion of the ground floor to provide 2x c1 apartments (1 x 1 bedroom and 1 x 2 bedroom) C1 apartments utilising associated integrated refuse area and cycle storage. The premises is located in the heart of Croydon High Street on a road that contains other office buildings and a number of residential buildings.

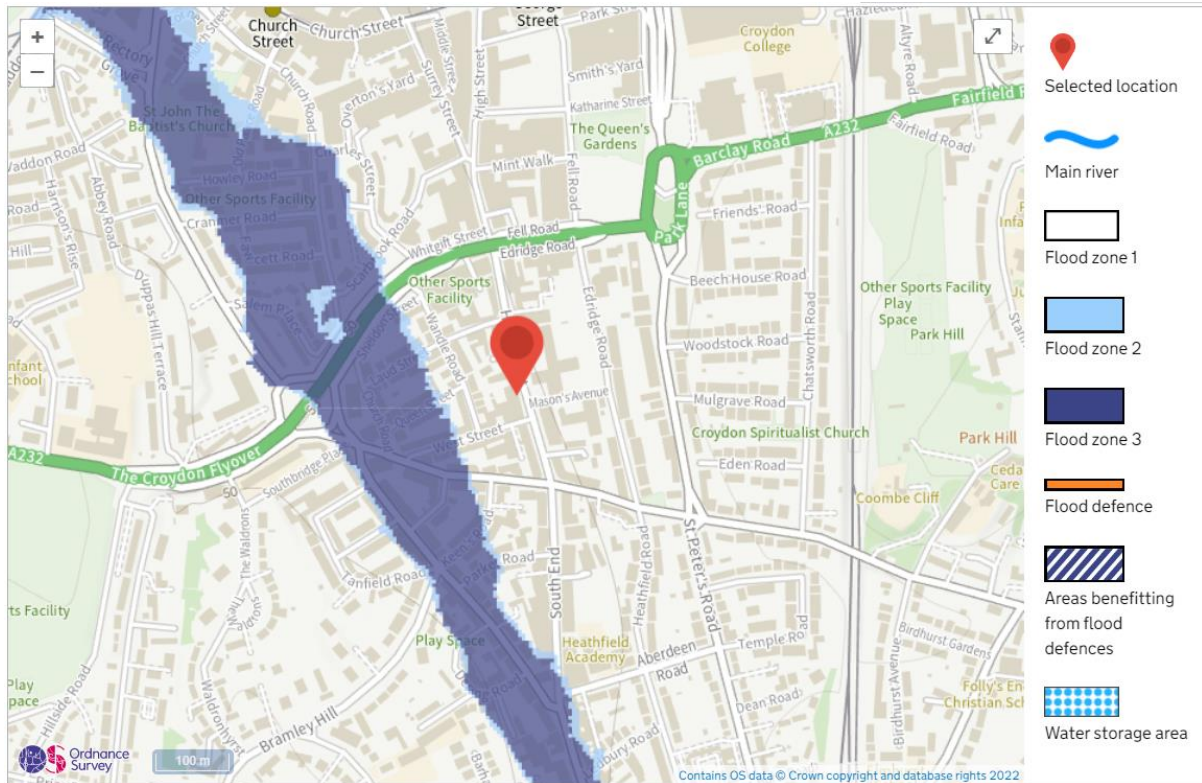
Proposal

This proposal seeks the alterations and conversion of the ground floor to provide 2 x apartments as C1 apartment utilising associated integrated refuse area and cycle storage.

Surroundings from the Site

Generally, on this stretch of Croydon High Street, there is a mix of two - three storey and taller buildings of varying ages and frontages. The site is in a location which is easily accessible to the town centre and has close transport links via national rail, tram and bus. The bus routes along the high going to various location around Croydon such as South Croydon, Caterham, Purley, Banstead, West Croydon, Sutton etc for bus routes 60, 119, 166, 312, 405, 407, 412, 466, 468, 645. There are a wide range of local shops, supermarkets, community facilities near or around the site.

As mentioned previously in this document the site has a PTAL rating of 6a meaning an excellent level of transport links and as such, this proposal will not require car parking. The site sits in a flood zone level of 1 as demonstrated by the environment agency map seen below.



(Flood Zone Level Map: Zone 1)

National Policy

The existing building to the front has consent for 13 flats, which are being implemented currently. The application is for part of the ground floor which does not form part of the 13 flat prior approval. This space is void, due to not being able to meet daylight/sunlight standards for permanent accommodation.

The application space is proposed to be used for C1 use as a self-catering apartment, but not as a permanent form of accommodation. Thus, its use at anyone time can only be for a maximum of 90 days to one tenant. Thereby, the proposed units would be used as short term rental akin to a hotel use. This would help to utilise this space into a type of short term accommodation.

There are minor external alterations which are not visible to the public.

The amount of transport links available on the high street, the PTAL of 6a as well as there being no car parking to our development makes this proposed development popular in demand and encourage future occupiers to walk and use the transport links available to them.

In addition, residents utilising the public transport opportunities allows them to support local businesses as well as encourage some sort of exercise. We are content to enter into a

s106/UU to mitigate the potential for future users to apply for car parking permits, however, an existing UU exists on this site. Adequate provision of cycle storage is proposed.

Principle of Use

The proposal is for the change of use of a void space and part of the ground floor from to provide Self Catering Apartment/Serviced Accommodation (C1) to include external and internal alterations to provide 2x self-contained planning units. This application provides flexibility to the owner of the building in this current climate. No loss of commercial floorspace takes place at ground floor level, the proposal would provide a more suited use of C1 as 2 x independent 1 & 2 bedroom units that are self-catering/serviced accommodation/short term residential accommodation (less than 90 days).

Furthermore, given its location (town centre boundary), rear ground floor position and no off-street parking, a flexible use which consists of finding either tenants who require smaller short term accommodation as short term “air bnb” style accommodation or equivalent on a temporary residential basis at this level would be acceptable.

As such, to meet the demand of the need for smaller serviced accommodation residential units, it is important for the proposal to include independent washing and kitchen facilities in order to serve the demand. Whilst the wider is being built this can be “built-in now”.

Character and Appearance of the Area

This proposal only includes minor external and internal alteration to the application space only.

The proposal would alter the elevations of the building and as such the proposed development would not be of detriment to the character and appearance of the properties, relationship with the adjacent buildings and general character of the area.

As such, the proposal would be acceptable on character and appearance grounds.

Standards of Accommodation

The Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) including the London Plan does not set minimum size standards for C1 type of accommodation and it is considered that the proposed size is more than reasonable. The proposed internal floor area per unit would be acceptable.

Amenity space would be proposed to the front of the unit within a patio space.

As such, it is considered, on balance, that the proposal would provide a satisfactory level of short term living accommodation for future occupiers. A condition can be attached accordingly.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

In terms of noise impacts, the proposal would not increase the amount of potential future occupiers and as such the level of impact would be mutual to what was previously assessed, if not less.

Parking and Transport Considerations

The previously approved application stated that 'The site is located in an area with a PTAL of 6b, which is excellent being well located on the edge of Croydon Town Centre. Given the accessibility of the site and location within a CPZ, a car free development would be appropriate in this location.

As such, given the Town centre siting and proximity to public transport facilities, it is considered that the car free nature of the proposal would be acceptable from a highways perspective.

As such, the proposal would not impact on the highway and pedestrian conditions of the area.

Trees, Landscaping, Biodiversity and Ecological Implications

There are no trees within the site or surrounds that could be impacted from the proposals. As such, the scheme would not impact on the boroughs biodiversity, trees and landscapes.

Waste

The proposed plans as part of the approved scheme indicated the location for the waste storage facilities to be contained along the side of the building within a concealed elevated enclosure.

A planning application to discharge this condition has been lodged and therefore the same siting and details would follow as part of this scheme.

Affordable Housing and CIL Contributions

In accordance with the CIL and Section 106 Obligations, developments are required to provide contributions relating to strategic infrastructure or related projects surrounding the site. Given the extent of development being proposed, the proposal would be liable to pay such contributions which will be dealt after any permission to the site. However, no CIL would be applicable for this change of use as it is conversion and within the Town Centre.

As the proposal does not incorporate any additional C3 units, no affordable housing would be triggered.

Conclusion

For the above reasons, it is considered that the flexibility provision of 2 independent C1 units would provide additional opportunity within the borough and create a better outcome in terms of occupation of vacant space/buildings and delivery of this site. As such the proposal, would be an improvement to the site and therefore would be considered acceptable.

We believe that the site has an opportunity to provide a high-quality conversion development for a 2x C1 units. The units overall have their own access and is in keeping with the form of the surrounding area. We would seek your favourable recommendation and consideration.