

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2017

by G J Fort BA PGDip LLM MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 18th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/W/16/3158217

18 Martin Road, Dagenham, Barking and Dagenham RM8 2XH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Mehmet Osman against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham.
 - The application Ref 16/00389/FUL, dated 15 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is erection of double storey side extension to create a one bed room house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. I consider the main issues in this appeal to be firstly, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; secondly, whether the proposed amenity space would meet the day-to-day needs of its occupiers; thirdly, whether the proposed development would make adequate provision of internal space; and fourthly, whether the proposed development would provide adequate arrangements for car parking.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Situated in a prominent corner location, the appeal site comprises land to the side of 18 Martin Road, including elements of garden and a parking space accessed from Bowes Road. The area is principally residential, with two-storey dwellings in short terraces, set back from the road and within reasonably generous plots establishing the predominant development grain. The flank walls of the Martin Road dwellings at the corner with Bowes Road are set away considerably from the highway emphasising the spaciousness of the streetscene.
 4. The appeal scheme seeks to develop a two-storey side extension to No 18 providing a separate dwelling. It would feature a hipped roof and its pattern of openings would more or less mirror that of No 18. The proposed development's flank wall would be close to the appeal site's boundary, and amenity space would be provided to its front and rear.
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5. The proposed development, due to its scale and site coverage, and its tight relationship with the appeal site's side boundary, would erode the spaciousness of the plotting close to this prominent corner and impart a cramped, shoehorned appearance to the plot at variance with the surrounding development grain. Moreover, the proposed development's flank wall would be on a line considerably proud of the building line of Bowes Road, and this combined with its adjacency to the nearest Bowes Road property, would exacerbate its discordant relationship with the surrounding streetscene. Furthermore, the constrained size of the proposed amenity space would vary considerably from the generally more generous plot ratios achieved in the appeal site's surroundings, particularly on corner plots, and would be an incongruous element when viewed together with the more spacious plot across Bowes Road. As a result of this incongruity, the proposed development would be of considerable harm to the character and appearance of the area.
6. Due to the harm that the proposed development would cause to the character and appearance of the area, it would conflict with Policy CP3 of the Barking and Dagenham Core Strategy (adopted July 2010) (the Core Strategy); Policies BP8 and BP11 of the Barking and Dagenham Borough Wide Development Policies Development Plan Document (adopted March 2011) (The DPD); and the Residential Extension and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (adopted February 2012). Taken together, and amongst other matters, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that development proposals achieve high quality standards in relation to design and layout respecting and strengthening local character and providing a sense of place.

Amenity Space

7. Policy BP5 of the DPD sets local requirements for the provision of external amenity space for dwellings. Whilst I am aware that the description of development indicates that the proposed dwelling would be a one bedroom property, I am mindful of the Council's case that the room annotated as a "Study Room/Library" could be used as a bedroom, and thus for the purposes of this policy the relevant amenity space requirement is that for a 2 bedroom house. The minimum standard set by the DPD in this regard is 50 SqM, with a depth of rear garden of a minimum of 12 SqM. The proposed development would undershoot this requirement to a considerable degree, both in terms of the overall space provided of around 30 SqM and in terms of the limited depth of the rear garden of around 5m. Moreover, the space available in the rear garden would be constrained further by the proposals to place cycle and wheelie bin storage within it. Consequently, I consider that the proposed development would not provide adequate provision of external amenity space that would meet the day-to-day needs of its occupants.
8. I note that Parsloes Park is within walking distance of the site, however, I saw that this is situated across a dual carriageway, which was busy at the time of my site visit. Consequently, I consider that the presence of Parsloes Park in the wider area would not meet the exception given within Policy BP5 in relation to sites that adjoin extensive parkland where there may be scope for a reduction in the provision of amenity space. The proposed development would thus conflict with Policy BP5 insofar as it seeks to ensure that appropriate external private amenity space is provided to meet the needs generated by a development.

Internal Space

9. The proposed development would provide around 72 SqM of internal space which would meet the minimum space requirement for a development of this type given in the Government's *Technical housing standards-nationally described space standard* (the Space Standard). However, the second bedroom, annotated as a "Study Room/Library" would not supply the minimum space required for a bedroom given in the Space Standard. However, the under-provision of space within the second bedroom would only be to a very modest degree, and I am mindful that an internal wall could be repositioned to ensure that the bedroom met with the relevant requirement.
10. Consequently, whilst I note the variance from the Space Standard and thus Policy 3.5 of *The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London-Consolidated with Alterations Since 2011* (Adopted March 2016) in this regard, I consider that minor revisions to the internal layout could meet the relevant standards, and thus this variance would not constitute a reason to withhold permission in this case, or indicate that the proposed development would fail to meet the day-to-day needs of its future occupants in terms of the provision of internal space.

Parking

11. No off-street parking spaces are proposed. At my site visit, during a weekday morning, and admittedly only a snapshot in time, I saw that some parking spaces were available both on Martin Road and Bowes Road, though I am mindful that additional parking demand may occur at night. I note that the appeal site is within an area with a relatively low Public Transport Accessibility Level and that consequently the proposed development's residents could be more reliant on private transport. However, the increase in residential occupancy as a result of the proposed development would only be modest, and consequently, the likely increase in demand for parking would be similarly limited. Moreover, the double-yellow lines adjacent to the street corners would tend to deter any unsafe parking and related manoeuvring at the junction. Consequently, I consider that no cumulatively or severely harmful effects to highway safety or residential amenity would arise from the proposed development in this regard.
12. The proposed development would remove the off-street parking space currently available to No 18. However, given the limited capacity for parking on this space, I consider that its removal would not cause a significant increase in demand for on-street parking spaces, and would thus avoid severe harm to either highway safety or residential amenity.
13. As a result, I consider that the proposed parking arrangements would not be inadequate. Accordingly, I can discern no conflict with Policies BR9 and BR10 of the DPD insofar as they seek to ensure that developments make adequate arrangements for parking that avoid harmful impacts to highway safety and residential amenity.

Conclusion

14. I have found that the development would cause no severe impacts to highway safety, or residential amenity as a result of its proposed parking arrangements. I have also found that the slight variance from the Space Standard would not,

of itself, constitute a reason to refuse the appeal. However, these matters are demonstrably outweighed in the overall planning balance by the considerable harm that the proposed development would cause to the character and appearance of its surroundings, and in its failure to provide adequate amenity space to meet the day-to-day needs of its residents.

15. I note that the delivery of an additional house on the site could contribute to development plan and national objectives in terms of boosting the supply of housing, although only to a limited degree. Like any development proposal this would have some economic and social benefits, although due to the modest scale of development these would not weigh heavily in favour of the scheme. Furthermore, the environmental harm that the proposed development would cause to the character and appearance of its surroundings would subsist long after the economic benefits of the proposed development had faded away. Moreover, the proposed development's social benefits would be tempered to a considerable degree by a failure to provide an adequate amount of external space to meet the day-to-day needs of its future occupants. Thus the proposed development's harmful effects demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. Accordingly, for these reasons, the proposed development would not comprise sustainable development for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework.
16. The proposed development would also conflict with the policies of the development plan insofar as they are relevant and have been brought to my attention. No material considerations have been advanced that would outweigh this conflict. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G J Fort

INSPECTOR