
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by David Walker MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/16/3160541
128 High Street, Barnet EN5 5XQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr James Shea of W.D. Properties (UK) Ltd against the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/4732/FUL, is dated 18 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Extension of existing one bed second floor flat to a two bed flat. Extension at second and third floor to form new two bed and one bed flats'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission for the development described as 'Extension of existing one bed second floor flat to a two bed flat. Extension at second and third floor to form new two bed and one bed flats' is refused.

Main Issues

2. The Council has confirmed that had the application been determined it would have been refused on two grounds: firstly, the proposed extensions would be out of context with the character of the area and introduce a form of development detrimental to the character of the host property; and, secondly, the proposal would result in increased parking demand that would be detrimental to the free flow of traffic and highway safety.
3. Accordingly, I consider the main issues to be:
 - i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and
 - ii) whether there would be adequate parking arrangements having regard to the free flow of traffic and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers using the highway.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is located in a row of 2 to 3 storey buildings in a range of styles and roof configurations, including the gable fronted forms at No 126. The proposal would extend the property to provide the additional accommodation by introducing a new mansard roof with front facing windows and a flat roof fourth storey behind.
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5. A location on a shopping street provides a prominent frontage and I acknowledge that eyes will inevitably be drawn to the shop windows at ground floor level. Nevertheless, there is a rich diversity of attractive buildings and roof forms along the street that provides an attractive ambience to the retail area.
6. Being positioned behind the new mansard roof the fourth storey is unlikely to be seen in views from opposite at Salisbury Road and from the south along High Street. However, from the north the low overall height of Nos 130-132 adjoining would afford views towards the fourth storey where the extensions would rise above the height of the existing buildings.
7. Although my attention has been brought to unsympathetic extensions at other parts of High Street, in the immediate context the additional height and form of the roof extensions would appear out of place and disjointed in the street frontage. The proposal would jar with the simple roof forms of the row.
8. I acknowledge that the impact would be less pronounced at the rear due to the utilitarian roof forms at this position and the screening provided by the stairwell. However, neither this nor the improvements that would be delivered to the existing second floor flat would outweigh the harm to the streetscene along High Street I have identified.
9. The harm to the character and appearance of the area would conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan: Core Strategy 2012 (the CS) that seek the highest standards in urban design and require development to respect local context and local character, amongst other things. It would also be out of accord with Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan: Development Management Policies 2012 (the DMP) to protect Barnet's character and respect the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings.

Parking

10. The additional accommodation provided by the extensions would likely give rise to extra demand for car parking in an area with a shortage of supply. With the main access for the flats being onto High Street this would lead to inconsiderate parking or stopping along a busy road that has limited parking opportunities. Such parking would cause an obstruction to the existing traffic along High Street resulting in evasive manoeuvres that could endanger the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, as well as other drivers.
11. While the appellant points to a contribution that could be made towards minimising these effects no agreement has been provided with the appeal to enable this to be taken into account. Moreover, any cycle parking facilities that could be provided within the existing stairwell would not be available to all occupants of the flats to deliver any meaningful mitigation for the increase in travel demands.
12. The lack of suitable parking arrangements in the proposal would therefore be harmful to the free-flow of traffic and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers along High Street. Such an effect would lead to conflict with Policy CS9 of the CS that prioritises the reduction of congestion through parking management, and Policy DM17 of the DMP that requires parking to be provided to the Council's standards or, exceptionally, in areas of Controlled Parking Zones subject to measures to prevent permits being applied for.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed and planning permission refused.

David Walker

INSPECTOR