
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 April 2017

by D. M. Young BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI MIHE

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

Decision date: 18 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/17/3172476

36 Oakleigh Crescent, Whetstone, London N20 0BS.

- 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 Ms Lesa Burch-Humphrey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/6379/HSE, dated 3 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 4 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is a rear first floor extension (disabled facilities).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear first floor extension (disabled facilities) at 36 Oakleigh Crescent, Whetstone, London N20 0BS in accordance with the terms of the application, 16/6379/HSE, dated 3 October 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1/1250 Location Plan, C16/65/04 A, C16/65/05 A and C16/65/06 A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. This is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey, semi-detached property occupying a corner plot on Oakleigh Crescent. The surrounding area is residential in nature and characterised by pairs of semi-detached properties arranged along mainly straight, parallel streets. Although there is some variation in facing materials, the area retains a broadly homogenous character with pairs of dwellings of similar scale addressing the road behind a consistent building line.
 4. However, whilst not unattractive, its distinctiveness as an area has been vitiated by the widespread loss of front gardens to paved parking areas and the prevalence of single and double storey, side additions. As a consequence, the
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area is not particularly notable or sensitive in architectural or streetscape terms.

5. The property has been previously extended at ground and first floor levels and is one of the larger dwellings on the street. The appeal scheme seeks permission for a relatively modest rear extension which would be constructed above the existing single storey rear extension which contains specialist accommodation for the appellant's disabled daughter. The existing single storey element to the open-plan kitchen area would be retained.
6. When I visited the area I saw that a similarly proportioned extension has been constructed at 43 Oakleigh Crescent. The appellant has submitted photographs purporting to show other similar extensions in the area. Whilst No 36 is perhaps more prominent than some of the cited examples, the extension would be fairly modest in its extent and would not increase the overall footprint, width or height of the property. Thus there would be no encroachment into the strip of land separating the side elevation from Oakleigh Crescent. Views of the extension would be limited to oblique glances from the north-east. However, even from here a small extension constructed from matching materials could hardly be described as prominent or incongruous given the site's context in a built-up residential area.
7. I therefore conclude that the extension would have little overall effect on the character and appearance of the area and would certainly fall a long way short of causing unacceptable harm. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with Policy CS1 of the "*Barnet Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document 2012*" or Policy DM01 of "*Barnet Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document 2012*". Collectively these policies seek high quality design that respects the character of the surrounding environment and has an understanding of local characteristics. Additionally, the development would amount to high quality design, add to the overall quality of the area and reinforce local distinctiveness as required by the "*National Planning Policy Framework*". Finally, the development would accord with the aims and objectives of the Council's "*Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance 2016*".

Conclusion

8. I have imposed the standard implementation condition as well as a condition to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, as this provides certainty. A condition relating to external facing materials is necessary to ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development.
9. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

D. M. Young

Inspector