



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 May 2017

by J Ayres BA Hons, Solicitor

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

Decision date: 15th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/17/3170765

179A and land to the rear of 171-173 Victoria Road, New Barnet, Barnet EN4 9PA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Victoria Road EN4 Development Ltd against the decision of London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/6827/FUL, dated 24 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing building and erection of four two-storey houses with eight off-street parking spaces, cycle stores, associated turning area, amenity space, landscaping and refuse/recycling store.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies to the rear of Nos 171-179 Victoria Road, which is predominantly residential and characterised by two-storey semi-detached houses with traditional pitched roofs.
4. The pattern of the built form that the proposal would introduce, and the physical design of the proposal itself in respect of its fenestration and detailing, would be distinctly at odds with the surrounding residential properties. The proposal would introduce materials that are more akin to the commercial structures it would replace than the residential structures it would sit adjacent to.
5. The appellant refers to the design responding to the character of both residential and commercial development within the area. I accept that development is mixed in the general locality; East Barnet Road is a short distance from the site and accommodates a mixture of commercial and residential development. However, the appeal site is surrounded by residential development, and in my view the appellant has not taken the opportunity to reinforce local distinctiveness of the immediate area.

6. The large areas of glass proposed on the first floors of the new houses would not respect the smaller and more traditional proportions of the windows in the surrounding area. The use of a flat roofline would be distinctly at odds with the residential properties surrounding the site, and would maintain a commercial appearance which would fail to respect the prevailing built form.
7. The fenestration would not compliment the materials found in the surrounding residential properties, and would be more akin to the commercial appearance of the development along East Barnet Road, thus looking out of place with the site's residential surroundings. The use of conditions to control aspects of the development such as external materials would not address the fundamental design concerns raised.
8. I accept that the appellant has provided suitable amenity space for the dwellings, and the staggered design would assist in breaking up the overall built mass of the proposal. However these factors do not persuade me to find the scheme as a whole acceptable.
9. I note the appellant's reference to appeal APP/N5090/W/3003001. In that appeal the Inspector recognised the domestic scale of Victoria Road, whilst acknowledging East Barnet Road, upon which the referenced appeal site is located, had characteristic similar to town centres. The Inspector also found that the proposal was appropriate in its design for the main road frontage. I consider this appeal to be materially different. This site is located in a more residential area, and therefore the design should respond to, and enhance, the character of the residential area. I therefore attach limited weight to the other appeal decision. I am aware that the site has got planning permission for the development of two houses. However, I have limited details about that scheme and it appears materially different from the current scheme of four houses. It has therefore had limited influence on my findings.
10. Accordingly, I conclude that the design of the proposal would fail to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal therefore fails to comply with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016) in respect of ensuring development has regard to the form and structure of an area, and makes a positive contribution to the public realm. The proposal would be contrary to Policies CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Adopted Core Strategy (2012) which seek to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the spaces within the Borough. The proposal would not comply with Policy DM01 of the Adopted Development Management Policies DPD (2012) and the Adopted Residential Design Guidance SPD (2016) with regard to ensuring that development represents high quality design.

Other Matters

11. It is noted that the Council did not raise any other concerns about the proposal. However, this and any other matters raised, do not outweigh my earlier findings.

Conclusion

12. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Johanna Ayres INSPECTOR