
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 July 2017

by Helen Cassini BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 08 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/17/3175173

Thorverton Court, 1-3 Thorverton Road, Cricklewood, London NW2 1RE

- 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 D Lederman against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref: 16/7479/FUL dated 22 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is the construction of third floor with mansard roof and balcony to create 1no self-contained residential dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the description of the proposal from the Council's decision notice as it provides a full description of the development.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises of a purpose built flat development, in a relatively prominent position, in proximity to the junction of Cricklewood Lane. The site is a three-storey, red brick building with a flat roof. Five garages and car parking is located to the rear of the building on the northern boundary. A low boundary wall and mature hedgerow screens views of the ground floor flat from the highway.
5. The surrounding area is predominately residential in nature. Dwellings on Thorverton Road consist mainly of two-storey, semi-detached properties, which follow a consistent building line. Pitched roofs dominate the skyline and dwellings are set back from the highway by modest front gardens with low boundary walls.
6. A car park, for sole use of members of the leisure centre located on Cricklewood Lane, is directly opposite the appeal site. St Agnes Catholic Primary School, sited next to the car park, is a two-storey purpose built school, which also features a pitched roof.

7. Dwellings on Cricklewood Lane, close to the junction with Thoverston Road, are predominately two-storey, although a number appear to have mansard roof extensions on the front elevations. A leisure centre and Middlesex University halls of residence are located opposite the junction with Thorverton Road.
8. I am mindful of the fact that the site has been the subject of a previous refusal for planning permission in 2016¹. As such, I am aware that the appellant has aimed to address the reasons for refusal in the proposal before me.
9. The appeal proposal seeks to extend the host building by the installation of an additional storey, which would create a one bedroom, self-contained unit, accessed via a communal staircase. The addition of timber cladding to the front projecting annex of the host building is also proposed.
10. Following the previous refusal of planning permission, it is noted that the scheme has been amended and a flat roof is proposed instead of a mansard style design. The appeal property represents an anomaly within the street scene due to its design. Despite the amendment made to the design, the proposal would represent a substantial addition to the host building, creating a bulky and discordant feature. The additional storey would result in the building being approximately 1 metre higher than the adjacent dwelling at 1 Thorverton Road.
11. The proposed flat roof design further exacerbates the fact that the host building is significantly at odds with the character of the wider street scene. Its incongruity would also be accentuated by the increase in height in comparison to the adjacent dwelling. It is noted that the proposal would be set back slightly from the front elevation of the host building. However, despite the proposed set-back position, it is not considered that this would significantly reduce the visual dominance of the proposal.
12. The majority of the surrounding dwellings benefit from traditional features and are constructed from red brick; with many having light-coloured render at the first floor. As such, the proposed use of timber cladding on the front annex would appear as an alien feature, and would fail to be well assimilated with both the host building and the wider street scene.
13. The appellant has drawn my attention to a recently consented planning application at 112-132 Cricklewood Lane². However, I have very little information relating to the particular circumstances of this development and as such, a comparison is of limited relevance in this instance. I have therefore considered the appeal before me on its individual merits.
14. I have had regard to the fact that the proposal would help to provide a mix of housing in the area, does not harm the living conditions of nearby residential occupiers and that the site is previously developed. However, the benefits of providing additional accommodation do not outweigh the identified harm.
15. Consequently, the proposal would not appear as a logical addition to the host building, and would adversely affect the character and general appearance of the area as a whole. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to accord with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan 2016, Policy DM01 of the Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document 2012,

¹ Council reference 16/2836/FUL

² Council reference 16/0601/FUL

Policies CS NPPF, CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document 2012 and Barnet's Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance 2013. These policies and guidance seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development is of a high quality design which respects the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons, and having regards to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Helen Cassini

INSPECTOR