
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2017

by Katie McDonald MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/17/3174398
60 Brimsdown Avenue, Enfield EN3 5ER

- 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 Guzel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 16/05477/FUL, dated 25 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 26 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is for a front ground floor extension including porch and convert property into 2 independent dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The ground floor front extension is complete, save for the fenestration changes, and I have considered the development as such. The description of development included the word 'regularise'. I have removed this from my banner heading as 'regularise' is not an act of development.

Main Issues

3. I consider the main issues are:
 - i) whether the development provides an appropriate housing mix;
 - ii) the effect of the development upon the living conditions of future occupiers; and,
 - iii) the effect of the development upon the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Located on a busy road, the appeal site is a two storey end of terrace dwelling house, featuring white rendered walls and a tiled hipped roof, with projecting gable detail to the front. It has a two storey side and front extension whilst the wider area has an urban, residential character.
5. The proposal seeks consent to subdivide the property into 2 dwellings, along with a ground floor front extension and fenestration alterations. The 2 properties each feature 2 bedrooms at first floor and living accommodation to the ground floor.

Housing mix

6. Core Policy 5 of the Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 (November 2010) (CS) seeks to ensure that new developments offer a range of housing sizes to meet housing need. Policy DMD5 of the Enfield Development Management Document (November 2014) (DMD) sets out parameters for residential conversions, including the need for compensatory family accommodation in the conversion of existing family units into self-contained flats.
7. There is a shortfall in the supply to need ratio of larger dwelling types¹, being a 45% need for 3 bedroom and 20% need for 4 bedroom dwellings. Whilst the original property is reverting back to a 2 bedroom dwelling and the proposal provides a new 2 bedroom dwelling; it is currently a 4 bedroom dwelling that provides a larger family home in the Borough, contributing towards the overall housing supply.
8. The proposal will provide no compensatory accommodation, and there are no other material considerations presented that outweigh the loss of this family dwelling.
9. Therefore, although the loss of one family dwelling would appear to be relatively minor, it will have a resultant detrimental impact to the provision of an appropriate housing mix. As such, the proposal is in conflict with Core Policies 4, 5 and 30 of the CS, Policy DMD5 of the DMD and Policy 3.8 of The London Plan (March 2016) (LP), which seek, amongst other things, to ensure an adequate supply of high quality housing and a genuine choice of homes.

Living conditions

10. The internal space provided within 'dwelling 2' (the dwelling formed within the extension) does not meet the Government's Technical Housing Standards - nationally described space standard that is adopted through Policy 3.5 of the LP.
11. The housing standards set out minimum gross internal areas (GIA) for the provision of acceptable living conditions. The accommodation proposed falls significantly below the standard for a 2 bedroom, 4 person unit and somewhat below the standard for a 2 bedroom, 3 person unit. Furthermore, the layout, having the bathroom accessed from the main living area, will be rather unconventional, contrived and inconvenient; and indicates that there will be restricted floor space available.
12. Consequently, the failure to provide the minimum GIA and the inefficient layout will result in an unduly cramped living environment which will create unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers.
13. Therefore, I find that the proposal conflicts with Policies DMD6, DMD8, and DMD37 of the DMD, Core Policy 4 of the CS and Policy 3.5 of the LP. These policies seek to ensure that housing developments should be of the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context; and new homes should have adequately sized rooms and convenient and efficient room layouts which are functional, fit for purpose and suitable for its intended function. I also find conflict with the London Housing SPG and the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

¹ Paragraph 5.4.1 - Enfield Housing Market Assessment (February 2010)

Character and appearance

14. The front extension projects into the street scene at single storey level, and wraps around the two storey side extension, occupying around half of the front elevation. However, the dwelling is set back a fair distance from the road and there are a variety of other front extensions and porches in the street. I find that the use of materials and roof design harmonises with the rest of the dwelling, and by the nature of its height, it appears as a modest and subordinate addition that ties both the extension and original dwelling together.
15. Furthermore, I find that the proposed addition of a door and window to the front elevation would not be materially harmful to the host dwelling, or street scene. It is not uncommon to find 2 doors on the front elevation, and furthermore, 2 doors are also indicated on the 'approved plan (2008)'. Visually, the fenestration would appear very similar.
16. Consequently, I find that the proposal would have an acceptable effect upon the host dwelling and the character and appearance of the area, compliant with Policies DMD8 and DMD37 of the DMD, Core Policy 30 of the CS and Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the LP, which seek, amongst other things, high quality design and to ensure that development proposals have regard to the character of an area.

Other matters

17. I have not found there to be any conflict with Policy DMD9 of the DMD, given that this relates to amenity space, and the LPA have raised no issue in this regard. Nevertheless, the lack of harm in that respect does not outweigh that which I have identified above.

Conclusion

18. Whilst I have found no harm to the host dwelling and character and appearance of area, the development fails to provide an appropriate housing mix or acceptable living conditions for the future occupiers. These concerns outweigh the acceptability of the proposal in all other respects.
19. Having had regard to all other matters raised, and for the reasons above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Katie McDonald

INSPECTOR