



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2020

by Conor Rafferty LLB (Hons), AIEMA, Solicitor

Decision by P J Davies BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/19/3241511

23 Wickliffe Avenue, Finchley, London, N3 3EL

- 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 Mohammad Mashayeki against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 19/5042/FUL, dated 11 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as the 'demolition of existing house and erection of 3 x 3 bed townhouses'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site comprises a detached residential property located on the south side of Wickliffe Avenue, where the street is predominantly made up of detached and semi-detached dwellings. There is some diversity to the housing form and pattern which differs on the northern side of the street, but the appeal proposal would be seen principally in the context of the consistent scale and architecture of dwellings on the south side. Currently the appeal site also contributes positively to the existing spacing and arrangement of dwellings which allow for verdant views between buildings toward the rear gardens. Together with the spacious frontages this provides a sense of openness to the street scene. To the east of the site is an apartment building which is significantly larger in scale but nevertheless it sits off the site boundaries and responds to the architecture and arrangement of dwellings along this side of the road.
5. The proposed development involves the demolition of the current dwelling and the subsequent erection of three townhouses. It seeks to reflect the adjacent

apartments with a gable end feature on the front elevation and half brick design. Nonetheless, unlike the broad horizontal emphasis of adjacent buildings, the proposal would feature three narrow front gables, and it would sit tight on the boundaries reducing the visual gap with the building to the east. The building's siting forward of the house to the west would also accentuate the mass and bulk of the development across the site which would make it a visually dominant building. As a consequence, it would appear disproportionate to the plot width and present as an overly large building shoehorned into the site. In addition, the subdivision of the rear garden area would result in three narrow and compact plots that would fail to respect the prevailing settlement pattern present along the southern side of the street. The proposal would therefore introduce a feature to the streetscape that would not respect the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

6. While the landscaping for the proposal is primarily hardstanding, this is not uncommon along the street where garden areas vary from well landscaped spaces to open paved or concrete areas. Nonetheless the effect of the proposed strips of landscaping would be to segregate the frontage to create narrow sections at odds with the wide frontages nearby. The proposed landscaping would therefore fail to positively integrate the development with its context and would emphasise the overly dominant scale of built form and its cramped nature.
7. For the above reasons I find that the development would have a significantly adverse visual effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Accordingly, it would fail to comply with Policy CS5 of the London Borough of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document, September 2012; Policy DM01 of the London Borough of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document, September 2012 (the DMP); Policy 7.4 of the London Plan March 2016 and the London Borough of Barnet Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance, October 2016.

Other Considerations

8. The appellant has pointed out that there are a number of dwellings on Wickliffe Avenue with narrow frontages similar to that of the development, making particular reference to No. 10A Latymer Gardens. However, the opposite end of Wickliffe Avenue, where Latymer Gardens is located, benefits from its own character and style, different to that in proximity to the appeal site. The appeal is decided on its own site-specific circumstances and this other development does not alter my recommendation.
9. The appellant has further stated that the relationship of the proposal to the neighbouring dwelling at No. 21 Wickliffe Avenue in terms of height, mass and distance from the boundary is similar to that of the existing dwelling at the site with the approved extensions. No information on the precise nature of these extensions has been provided such that it can be considered that there is a greater than theoretical possibility that these would be implemented. In any event, the relationship of the proposal to the Wickliffe Court apartment complex differs in terms of height, mass and distance such that it is not comparable to the current dwelling and approved extensions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. Having had regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rafferty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, the appeal is dismissed.

P J Davies

INSPECTOR