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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 December 2020

**by L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/19/3241877**

**69 Brunswick Park Gardens, New Southgate, London N11 1EF**

- 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 Birnbeck Housing Association against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
  - The application Ref 19/3425/FUL, dated 18 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 August 2019.
  - The development proposed is new development on the vacant section of the external landscaped area associated with the existing building at 69 Brunswick Park, to create 4 self-contained and supported residential units.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

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

### Reasons

3. The appeal site is a parcel of land to the side of the building at 69 Brunswick Park Gardens. Brunswick Park Gardens is a residential street largely characterised by terraces and pairs of semi-detached dwellings constructed of red brick. The surrounding development has a strong sense of rhythm and symmetry with many of the buildings having central porch projections. Though different in terms of form, scale and design the buildings at Nos 69 and 71 also have a balanced and symmetrical appearance.
4. The proposal is for the erection of a two-storey building attached to the side of No 69. No 69 is a fairly substantial two storey detached building with a central projection spanning both stories. Though both buildings would contain flats, the proposal would have the visual effect of creating a new semi-detached pair with No 69. The proposed building would be slightly narrower than the building at No 69 but would, nevertheless, be of a scale which would be consistent with others in the area.
5. The front door and main entrance to the proposed building would be sited to one side of the building and would have a porch canopy above. Whilst the canopy would be similar to others in the area, no such canopy is present at No 69 and the resultant semi-detached pair would not reflect the symmetry found elsewhere. Moreover, buildings in the area generally have a central entrance which acts as a focal point, adds to the symmetry and creates a strong sense of uniformity. No 69 is such a

building and the central entrance projection is the most notable design feature of the building. The proposed building would not reflect this design and would, instead, have an off-centre appearance.

6. The appellant has drawn my attention to other examples of nearby properties which have offset porches. Whilst I have given these careful consideration in my assessment outlined above, the majority of these porches are present on end of terrace dwellings which are sited next to a symmetrical pair and are not representative of the dominant character and appearance of the area. Moreover, these examples do not appear in the same immediate visual context as would be the case for the proposed building. No 69 has a clear sense of symmetry and a clear central projection and the proposed building would be viewed in direct juxtaposition with this.
7. As such, in my view, the proposal would create a visually unbalanced pair of buildings which would fail to reflect the prevailing rhythm which characterises the area. I therefore consider that the proposed development would have a discordant appearance within the street scene and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
8. Consequently, the proposal would fail to meet the aims of Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies), September 2012 which, amongst other things, states that development proposals should preserve or enhance local character and respect the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings, spaces and streets. The proposal would also be at odds with Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan, March 2016 which seek high quality design which has regard to the pattern and grain of the existing spaces and streets.

### **Other Matters**

9. I acknowledge that consideration has been given to the design of the proposal with the aim of creating a building which would sit well within its wider context. I also note that the site is relatively constrained. However, in my view, as set out above, the proposed building would fail to complement the design of the existing building at No 69 with which it would form a pair.
10. I also recognise that the proposal would comply with other aspects of the adopted development plan. However, this is not sufficient to dissuade me from the conclusion I have reached that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
11. I have noted a number of other issues raised; including the effect on the living conditions of other nearby residents, the effect on local services and concerns regarding the construction process. However, as this proposal is going to be dismissed for other reasons and the other concerns expressed do not have a direct bearing on the main issues, it is not necessary for these to be explored further as part of this appeal.

### **Conclusion**

12. The proposed development would fail to accord with the development plan when taken as a whole. Therefore, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should fail.

*L J O'Brien*

INSPECTOR