
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 November 2020

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 December 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/20/3258075

22 Osidge Lane, Southgate, London N14 5JE

- 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 E Mani against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/1424/FUL, dated 14 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is alterations to convert a house into 2 flats.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. It is considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The proposed development is for the sub-division of a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling house into 2 flats. The internal and external space standards identified in the Council's *Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* (RDG) would be met by the proposed development. The Council also recognise that the activities associated with the comings and goings of 2 flats would not be materially different to the occupation of the property by a family.
4. The appellant claims that the type of flats proposed could meet a particular housing need. Further, the subdivision of the property would assist in meeting the housing requirement of the development plan. However, although reference has been made to the Council's *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* dating from 2010 and the conversion of existing buildings being a source of housing supply, no specific up-to-date evidence has been provided demonstrating that there is either a lack of demand for family dwelling houses or a demand for the type of flatted accommodation proposed within this area. In making these comments regard has been had to, at least in the short term, the appellant's intention to occupy one of the flats but the implications of the proposed sub-division of the property would go beyond this period of occupation.
5. The Council has expressed concern about the loss of a family dwelling. Reference is made to paragraph 2.8.1 of Barnet's Local Plan Development

Management Policies Development Plan Document (DMP) where the conversion of existing dwellings into flats are identified as having a potential cumulative effect that could be damaging to the quality of the environment and also detract from the character of established residential areas. This is part of the explanatory text for DMP Policy DM01.

6. Although within the wider area there are purpose built apartment buildings, it is reasonable for the Council to characterise the residential area surrounding the property as comprising family dwellings. It was not obvious during the site visit that other dwelling houses either had been sub-divided into flats or are in use as other forms of multiple occupation. Accordingly, the sub-division of the appeal property into flatted accommodation would cause unacceptable harm by failing to respect the prevailing character, appearance and context of the surrounding residential area which comprises family dwellings.
7. Although the proposed flats would satisfy the internal and internal space standards, this matter is outweighed by the unacceptable harm which has been identified and in the, especially where there is an absence of any specific up-to-date evidence of the need for flats. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and, as such, it would conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan Core Strategy and DMP Policy DM01. Amongst other matters, these policies require development to respect local context and the prevailing character. Accordingly, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR