



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 July 2022

by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/21/3285353

115 Park Road, New Barnet, Barnet EN4 9QR

- 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 Gibson against the decision of London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/5983/FUL, dated 1 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a terrace building comprising of No. 4 separate dwellings with integral garages, including access, driveway, parking and amenity space, following the demolition of the existing dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site currently comprises a large, detached bungalow set in spacious grounds. The bungalow is situated on a corner plot and sits in an elevated position. It is located on a section of Park Road that is predominantly made up of a wide range of large, detached properties set in spacious grounds. This arrangement gives this section of Park Road a distinctive, low-density character, with the large gardens contributing to give the area a sense of spaciousness. These are positive characteristics of the area surrounding the appeal site.
4. The proposed development would involve the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of a terrace of four dwellings built over three storeys with the third floor being accommodated in the proposed roof space. Proposed earthworks would result in the lowering of the current ground level similar to that of the footpath with the proposed rear gardens being at a higher level, giving the properties a split-level appearance.
5. Although the appellant has referred to various other forms of residential development in the wider area, such as terraced properties, semi-detached and flats, these do not form part of the immediate or visible context of the appeal site.
6. The proposed development would replace an existing detached bungalow in spacious grounds with a terrace of four dwellings with comparably significantly

smaller rear gardens. Due to the resulting plot size and the nature of the development proposed they would appear cramped and confined into their plots and be at odds with the relatively spacious nature of the surrounding area.

7. The appeal property and many of the surrounding dwellings are notable for the spaces and visual gaps that are maintained between buildings, whether through gardens, garages, or their overall design. The proposed terrace would be similar in height to that of the existing adjacent dwelling and would incorporate a gable roof design at each end. It would, however, lack any of the positive spacious characteristics in the existing street-scene and would appear considerably bulkier with its continuous two stories and large roof, spanning almost the entire width of the site. The fact that some properties in the area span the width of their plot does not justify allowing the harm I have identified.
8. The appeal site is located on a prominent and highly visible corner plot. Due to its overall scale, width and height, the proposed development would dominate this part of the street and jar with the surrounding properties despite being proposed at a lower ground level than the existing dwelling.
9. The proposed development would therefore contribute to the erosion and dilution of the pleasant spacious character of the surrounding area that is predominantly made up of large, detached dwellings in spacious plots. Due to its overall scale and massing the proposed development would also appear highly dominant and incongruous in the street-scene.
10. The proposed development would therefore cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Barnet Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document (2012) and Policy DM01 of the Barnet Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document (2012). Collectively, these policies seek to ensure, amongst other things, that development is of a high quality and standard of design, based on an understanding of local characteristics and should preserve or enhance local character and respect the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings, spaces and streets.
11. The proposed development would also be contrary to guidance contained within the Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2016) which seeks to ensure that new residential development relates to its setting and local character, the proposed density is suited to the site and to the wider context, and the proposal responds positively to reinforcing or improving local character. It also seeks to ensure that new development complements or improves the character of the area through, amongst other things, its siting, layout and integration with surrounding land, building lines, setbacks, fronts and backs; and responds to distinctive local patterns of development by respecting scale, massing and height of surrounding buildings.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

12. The Government's objective as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (the Framework) is to support housing growth. The proposed development would result in a slight increase in the Council's overall housing number. It would also bring a small number of additional residents to the area who would contribute to the local economy. Collectively, I give these matters moderate weight in favour of the proposed development.

13. However, the harm that I have identified that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area attracts significant weight that outweighs the benefits associated with the proposed development.
14. The proposed development would therefore conflict with the development plan and there are no identified other considerations that outweigh this conflict.
15. For the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR