



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2023

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/22/3310253

25 Oakleigh Gardens, Whetstone, Barnet N20 9AB

- 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 and Mrs Marples against the decision of London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 22/2593/HSE, dated 13 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. No.25 Oakleigh Gardens (No.25) is a semi-detached two-storey dwelling on the north-west side of Oakleigh Gardens, a residential cul-de-sac. There is a variety of different dwelling designs along Oakleigh Gardens, but all are semi-detached and well-spaced particularly around the green at the end of the cul-de-sac which No.25 fronts.
4. The front building line of No.25 aligns with the neighbouring semi-detached pair at No.26 and No.27 Oakleigh Gardens and at ground floor it extends up to the common boundary with No.26. It is proposed to extend at first floor over a depth of 6.6m up to the rear building line of the existing first floor. The first floor extension has been set back from the front elevation by 1m and has been designed with a hipped roof that would be lower in height than the existing flank gable. Due to its design and scale, the proposed first floor extension would appear subservient to the host dwelling.
5. The Council's *Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document* (October 2016) (RDG) does not form part of the development plan but is a material consideration. Paragraph 4.17 states that in order to reduce the visual impact of first floor extensions, there should normally be a minimum gap of 2m between the flank of neighbouring dwellings and a minimum gap of 1m from the boundary for most two-storey extensions. No.25's non-attached neighbour, at No.26 Oakleigh Gardens, has not been extended and is itself off-set from the

common boundary by more than 2m. However, the proposed first floor extension to No.25 would project up to the common boundary, with no offset at all. I observed on my site visit that although many dwellings along Oakleigh Gardens have been extended and altered in the past, they are all offset from their boundary at first floor level.

6. Whilst I note the appellant makes the point that the RDG guidance refers to '*most two-storey extensions*' (rather than all), in this case by projecting up to the boundary (the full width of the plot), the proposed extension would appear unduly prominent in the street scene and would be at odds with the prevailing character of well-spaced semis that I have identified. It would therefore conflict with the guidance at paragraph 4.17 of the RDG, but also with the objective of the guidance to prevent buildings being too close together and the closing of gaps where they are a common feature of a street.
7. Consequently, the proposals would conflict with Policies CS NPPF, CS1 and CS5 of the Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2012 and Policy DM01 of the Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) 2012. Amongst other things, these require developments to be of high quality design that respect local context, distinctive local character and the pattern of surrounding buildings and spaces.

Conclusions

8. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Jones

INSPECTOR