

Committee Report
Planning Committee on 12 January, 2011

Item No. 7
Case No. 10/2854

RECEIVED: 4 November, 2010

WARD: Queen's Park

PLANNING AREA: Kilburn & Kensal Consultative Forum

LOCATION: 32 Creighton Road, London, NW6 6ED

PROPOSAL: Excavation to create basement to dwellinghouse with front and rear lightwell

APPLICANT: Advantage Basement & Cellar Co Ltd

CONTACT: Indigo Blue Works Ltd

PLAN NO'S:
See condition 2

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

EXISTING

The property is a 2-storey mid terrace dwellinghouse on the northern side of Creighton Road, NW6. The site is within Queens Park conservation area but is not a listed building.

PROPOSAL

See above.

HISTORY

No relevant planning history

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004

BE9 Architectural Quality

BE25 Development in Conservation Areas

BE26 Alterations and Extensions to Properties in Conservation Areas

Queens Park Conservation Area Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Guidance 5: SPG5 Altering and extending your home

CONSULTATION

Neighbouring occupiers were consulted on 24th November 2010, a press notice was published on 2nd December 2010 and site notice was displayed on 7th December 2010.

9 objections have been received including a representation from the Queens Park Residents Association:

- The front lightwell will alter the look of the house in the conservation area, particularly after dark and allowing this is likely to set a precedent for future basements
- The Queens Park Design Guide does not permit basements
- The proposal is an overdevelopment, increasing the area of the house by up to 50%
- The existing tree will have to be felled.
- Potential impact on water table - this area is thought to have several springs and streams.

Other:

- Concern about subsidence and stability of neighbouring properties.
- The proposal would cause a great deal of noise and disturbance.
- Dust and dirt will impact on neighbours front gardens.

Blocking of parking bays during works.

REMARKS

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal envisages the creation of a basement below the footprint of the house plus the space between the outrigger and the side boundary wall, externally the proposal results in a front and rear lightwell.

At basement level a guest room is proposed which benefits from the front basement bay window and light well. There is also a bathroom, a reception room and to the rear a utility and boiler room and a study which benefits from the rear lightwell.

The proposal does not involve formation of self-contained accommodation in the basement. The quality of environment in the proposed basement space would be acceptable within the context of being an extension to a house, but as Members will be aware this would almost certainly not be the case if a self-contained unit were to be proposed. From looking at the plans, it is certainly the case that the living space with no or such limited light or outlook would not be acceptable to the Planning Service on amenity grounds.

ASSESSMENT

As Members will be aware, in Brent there is no adopted, or emerging, policy or guidance that discourages the development of basements as a matter of principal. Such developments must, therefore, be assessed on their individual merits, and, in this case, the impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Queens Park Conservation Area needs to be considered as the main issue.

From the main front wall the front lightwell projects by approximately 1.65m into the front garden and about 0.9m from the front of the bay. Its size is limited by an existing man hole in the front garden. The front garden is about 3.8m deep therefore the lightwell projection covers less than half of the depth of the garden

The front of the house is higher than street level as demonstrated by steps up to the front door. The front garden is also higher than pavement level, the plan indicates that the garden level is about 1.1m below the window sill of the bay. The garden level is proposed to be lowered as part of the works to closer to pavement level, the resultant ground level below the bay window sill is 1.18m. A metal grille is proposed over the lightwell that would sit flush with the ground level.

The substantial planting behind the front boundary wall is proposed to be retained, as described in email dated 10th December from the agent. It will be pruned and lifted and kept in temporary containers to the rear until works are complete. In addition, there are opportunities to increase the amount of planting and this is the subject of a condition requiring further details. The same

condition also ensures that in the event that the planting does not survive it will be replaced with similar planting to form a boundary hedge.

There remains sufficient space in the front garden for refuse and recycling storage for the family house, although the precise details are not within this application and, consequently they are conditioned. The existing hardstanding area will be replaced with black quarry tiles while the traditional black and white mosaic pathway will be retained.

Given that the only visual manifestations of the basement are 2 modest lightwells, one which would not be visible from the public realm and the other which would largely be screened by planting to the front Officers consider that the proposed alterations, required to facilitate the proposed basement, would preserve the character and appearance of the Queens Park Conservation Area.

For the information of Members, this is an approach that has been adopted previously in other Conservation Areas, as well as Queens Park, where a number of proposals for new basements have been submitted in recent times.

CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

The concerns raised by objectors in relation to the impact of the proposed development of the character and appearance of the property and surrounding Conservation Area have been addressed in the report above.

A number of objectors have expressed concerns regarding the potential effect of the development on the structural stability of the site and neighbouring properties, the disturbance caused by works during construction and the effects on the development on local hydrology and drainage. As Members will be aware, although these concerns are clearly understandable, these matters are not issues that can be used as material planning considerations that would justify a refusal to grant planning permission. If the development were to go ahead these issues would be subject to further consideration under other statutory controls including Building Regulations and Environmental Health that would ensure the structural integrity of the works as well as controlling noise, vibration and hours of operations.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant Consent

REASON FOR GRANTING

- (1) The proposed development is in general accordance with policies contained in the:-

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004
Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance 5 - Altering and Extending Your Home
Queens Park Conservation Area Design Guide

Relevant policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan are those in the following chapters:-

Built Environment: in terms of the protection and enhancement of the environment
Housing: in terms of protecting residential amenities and guiding new development

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

- (1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning on the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawing(s) and/or document(s):

2099
2100
W-11
W-12
Front garden plan

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) All new external work shall be carried out in materials that match, in colour, texture and design detail those of the existing building.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development which does not prejudice the amenity of the locality.

- (4) Details of materials for all external work, including samples, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced, including:

(a) Samples of the proposed hardstanding and details of its extent.

(b) A scheme of soft landscaping, including hedge, must be submitted and shall include planting plans, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities.

(c) Details of the proposed grille.

(d) Details of refuse storage.

Once approved, the soft landscaping in the front garden shall be retained or replaced in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the landscape work to be completed during the first available planting season following completion of the development hereby approved. Any planting that is part of the approved scheme that within a period of *five* years after planting is removed, dies or becomes seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season and all planting shall be replaced in the same positions with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority first gives written consent to any variation.

The development must be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

INFORMATIVES:

None Specified

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Liz Sullivan, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5377



Planning Committee Map

Site address: 32 Creighton Road, London, NW6 6ED

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