
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 November 2016

by Elizabeth Pleasant DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/16/3157344

8/10 Friars Avenue, Whetstone, London N20 0XH

- 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 Mrs Alison Smith against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/3092/HSE, dated 18 April 2016, was refused by a notice dated 6 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is first floor rear extensions to 8 and 10 Friars Avenue. Front dormer to No 10 Friars Avenue.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to first floor rear extensions to 8 and 10 Friars Avenue. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to a front dormer to No 10 Friars Avenue in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/3092/HSE, dated 18 April 2016, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan; Block Plan, Ref 51166/1; Existing Plans and Elevations, Refs BD/15/33/1 & BD/15/33/2; Proposed Plans and Elevations, Refs BD/15/33/3 & BD/15/33/4.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the dormer hereby permitted shall match those used on the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council altered the description of the development from 'First floor rear extension for walk in wardrobe' to 'First floor rear extension to 8 and 10 Friars Avenue. Front dormer to No 10 Friars Avenue.' This is also the description used by the appellant on the appeal form and I consider it to be a more accurate description of the appeal proposal. The Council dealt with the application on this basis and so shall I.
 3. For the reasons that follow, I find the proposed front dormer to No 10 Friars Avenue to be acceptable and it clearly severable physically from the proposed first floor rear extensions to 8 and 10 Friars Avenue. Therefore, I intend to issue a split decision in this case and grant planning permission for the front dormer to No 10.
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Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

5. Friars Avenue is an attractive suburban street characterised by a rich mix of semi-detached and detached properties which display modest front gardens and driveways enclosed by low walls and planting. The properties vary in their individual design characteristics, but by reason of their relatively uniform scale, plot size and siting they create a harmonious street scene.
6. Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan, Development Management Policies, Development Plan Document, 2012 (DPD) states that proposals should preserve or enhance local character and respect the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings, spaces and street. More specific guidance on house extensions is found in the Council's Residential Design Guidance, Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It advises that proposed extensions should be consistent with the form, scale and architectural style of the original building and they should normally be subordinate to the original house and not be overly dominant.
7. Nos. 8 and 10 Friars Avenue are detached properties both of which have been previously extended to the rear by substantial single and two-storey additions. It is proposed to add a small pitched roof dormer onto the front roof slope above the attached garage of No 10. This hipped roof is recessed well behind the main front elevation of No 10 and is not visually dominant within the overall street scene. Whilst I accept that front dormer windows are not an original feature in this street, the properties do all displays different design characteristics. The proposed dormer would be small, well designed with a simple hipped roof and would sit comfortably within the roof slope. Furthermore, it would be identical to the front dormer that has been constructed at No 6 Friars Avenue.
8. Although No 12 has a garage with a similar roof profile situated adjacent to the proposal, the neighbouring properties are visually distinct and do not display any overall symmetry. I consider that the proposed dormer would be an appropriate addition to the house and would not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would not therefore conflict with the development plan policies set out above.
9. Turning to the remainder of the development, the first floor rear extensions. Both Nos. 8 and 10 have been previously extended across the full width of their rear elevations at ground level. They also display double height extensions which have been constructed in relatively central positions on their rear elevations. However, despite the dominance of these existing additions, their scale and positioning has ensured that the original form of each of the dwellings remains discernible.
10. In the case of both properties the proposed extensions would introduce further additions to the first floor rear elevations. Although I recognise that the proposals would incorporate materials and fenestration to reflect those of the host property, and their ridgelines would be marginally lower, the cumulative impact of each proposal would be to almost totally obscure the original rear

elevation of their host property. Consequently, the extensions would not be subordinate to the original house and the resultant scale of the additions would diminish the attractive appearance, form and architectural style of the original dwelling.

11. I have taken into consideration the location of the properties and acknowledge that they do not lie within a Conservation Area nor would the proposed rear extensions impact on the overall appearance of the street. However, the proposals would be clearly visible to views from neighbouring properties and for the reasons given above they would detract from the intrinsic architectural quality of these suburban properties.
12. My attention has been drawn to an appeal decision in Hillingdon. However, the decision relates to a different property in a different location and I am not aware of the individual site circumstance. I therefore give this consideration limited weight, and in any event each application must be considered on its own merits.
13. I conclude that the proposed first floor rear extensions to 8 and 10 Friars Avenue would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property. The proposal therefore conflicts with the development plan, and in particular Policies 7.4 & 7.6 of the London Plan which aims to ensure that new development respects local character and architecture, and Policies CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan, Core Strategy, 2012 which seek to ensure, amongst other things, that new development protects and enhances Barnet's high quality suburbs. I also find conflict with Policy DM01 of the DPD and SPD the aims of which are set out above and the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework to secure high quality design.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that subject to conditions required to specify the approved plans and materials, which are required to provide certainty and safeguard the character and appearance of the area, the appeal should be allowed insofar as it relates to the front dormer to 10 Friars Avenue, and dismissed insofar as it relates to the proposed first floor rear extensions to 8 and 10 Friars Avenue.

Elizabeth Pleasant

INSPECTOR