

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 December 2016

by Richard Schofield BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 03 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/16/3164241

34 Greenway, Southgate N14 6NN

- 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 & Mrs Brian Pomphrey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 16/03522/HOU, dated 1 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and outbuilding and erection of part single and part two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. It is evident from the decision notice that the Council's sole concern with the appeal scheme is the first floor side extension. No objections are raised to the single-storey aspect of the scheme. I have no reason to depart from this view and, thus, my decision focuses on the matter of the first floor extension.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Meadway Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).

Reasons

4. The Conservation Area is comprised of mature suburban residential streets. Its special interest is derived from the distinctive collection of cottage style detached and semi-detached houses, typical of the interwar period's amalgam of historic architectural influences, set within verdant surroundings. Houses are varied in design, but share common and distinctive features including prominent chimneys. Development is typically separated by single garages, some side by side, allowing for views through to the deep gardens, and/or allotments, with mature trees, beyond. These form an attractive landscape backdrop to the dwellings.
 5. 34 Greenway (No 34) forms an asymmetrical pair with 35 Greenway. It is an attractive bay fronted house with a hipped roof and the prominent chimneys typical of dwellings in the area. Its single garage allows for distinctive views between No 34 and 18 Meadway (No 18) to the mature trees beyond, contributing to the characteristic sense of spaciousness within the Conservation Area. It is typical of the Conservation Area and contributes positively to it.
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6. The appeal proposal would result in the loss of No 34's characteristic chimney on its side elevation and infill the gap at first floor level between it and its neighbour, resulting in a significant curtailing of characteristic views, even with the presence of a narrow passageway, between the dwellings from the street. Overall, this would compromise the historic form and situation of No 34, as well as its juxtaposition with No 18.
7. I find that the appeal proposal would give rise to harm to the significance of the Conservation Area. This harm would be less than substantial, and the appellant has suggested two benefits arising from the scheme.
8. First, it is stated that the appeal scheme would allow for the addition of a 'much needed' additional bedroom. This may be so, but there is no evidence before me to suggest that an additional bedroom is in any way necessary rather than desirable. Second, it is suggested that the garage extension, which would be necessary to accommodate the first floor extension, would provide a more appropriately sized space for modern vehicles. This could, however, be achieved without the need for the first floor extension. Thus, these factors do not lead me to conclude that the harm to the Conservation Area is outweighed.
9. I conclude, therefore, that the appeal proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Meadway Conservation Area. As such, it would conflict with policies CP30 and CP31 of the Enfield Core Strategy; policies DMD13, DMD37 and DMD44 of the Enfield Development Management Document; and policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan. These seek, among other things, to ensure that new development, including roof extensions to residential properties, is of a high quality design; has regard to the special character and interest of heritage assets; has no adverse visual impact; is of an appropriate size; and is in keeping with the character of the host property.

Other Matters

10. My attention has been drawn to four approvals for, what are suggested as being, similar schemes in the immediate area. However, although the plans are before me, I am not aware of the circumstances in which the schemes were permitted and two of the host dwellings are stylistically different from No 34. In addition, in all but one case, including those featuring stylistically similar dwellings, the characteristic chimneys are retained.
11. I have also been provided with photographs of what are suggested as being similar extensions to other dwellings in the Conservation Area. From the photos, and my site visit, it is evident that the works have given rise to harm to the Conservation Area, by virtue of the loss of the distinctive sense of space between dwellings and, in some cases, the loss of key features on dwellings. As such, I do not consider them to set any precedent for the appeal proposal. Nor is there any indication of the dates of these works in relation to the Conservation Area designation.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard Schofield INSPECTOR