

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

by Geoff Underwood BA(Hons) PGDip(Urb Cons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 10 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/16/3158807

24 Netherlands Road, New Barnet, Barnet EN5 1BW

- 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 Nick Penfold against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/2726/FUL, dated 25 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is extensions and alterations to semi-detached property, currently utilised as two one-bedroom flats over two floors, to create two two-bedroom and one single bedroom flat over three floors, involving single storey flank extension, two storey rear extension, hip-to-gable extension and rear dormer together with new parking space at rear of property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect the proposed roof extensions would have on the character and appearance of the host building and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal building is one of a pair of semi-detached properties and is located on a corner plot where Netherlands and Calton Roads meet. The proposal includes the creation of single and two storey extensions to the side and rear which would present a gabled elevation to Calton Road along with altering the existing hipped roof to a gabled configuration. Permission has previously been granted for similar side and rear extensions albeit that they would have had hipped roofs to the side and no rear dormer extension.
 4. Their situation on an incline means that the front elevation and roof of the adjoining house at 26 Netherlands Road steps up from that of the appeal property. Notwithstanding this relationship they both have hipped roofs and they share considerable similarities such that the proposal would result in the two properties appearing harmfully unbalanced, particularly at roof level. The previously approved, and proposed, single storey extensions to the side of the appeal property would, as a result of their height and situation, have a materially less marked effect on the balanced appearance of the pair. They would not have the effect that the relationship between the pair would be so altered as to render the proposed alterations less harmful in their context.
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5. The corner location of the property would mean that the roof alterations and gable treatment to the two storey side extension, although set back from and at an angle to the boundary, would be prominent within the streetscene of both Netherlands and Calton Roads. The combined effect of these aspects would be incongruous opposite 22 Netherlands Road (whose flank elevation faces the appeal property) which, although it has dormer extensions to its hipped roof, retains the overall form and appearance of a hipped roof property.
6. Considering whether or not gable end extensions are a characteristic feature of the street and wider area forms part of the approach the Council's Guidance¹ takes in assessing such proposals. The appellant has referred to other properties on Netherlands Road which have 'hip to gable' roof extensions. I observed a number of these when I visited the site including those where they were present on only one side of a pair of semi-detached houses, examples of which the appellant considers are more concentrated in the vicinity of the appeal site. However, I do not know the circumstances of those developments nor the policies and guidance that applied at the time of their consideration.
7. Furthermore, whilst they are noticeable within the wider streetscene, these examples are not so prevalent as to be the predominant roof form, including amongst the group of semi-detached buildings located between Calton and Dalmeny Roads of which the appeal property forms part. I also noted that whilst such gable extensions were present, they were less prevalent along Calton Road which also forms part of the streetscene setting within which the appeal proposal would be experienced. In any event, those examples that I saw, including those opposite the junction, serve to confirm the harmful unbalancing effects such alterations can give rise to on semi-detached pairs of properties.
8. Therefore, notwithstanding that the proposal's corner location would mean that any materially harmful effect on the separation between buildings would be avoided, it would nevertheless conflict with the other requirements of the Council's Guidance including that such extensions should not be out of character with the streetscene or unbalance a semi-detached pair of buildings.
9. The rear dormer would similarly not comply with the Council's guidance as it would be wider than half the width of the extended roof slope. Its scale, prominence and awkward configuration resulting from how it would partially straddle the proposed rear extension roof would not appear subordinate to the rear roof and also harm the building's and area's appearance and character.
10. The proposal would therefore not produce a high quality of design which would enhance the borough's suburbs nor would it respect local context and character. As such it would be contrary to Local Plan Policies CS5² and DM01³ as supported by the Council's Guidance, London Plan, 2016 Policy 7.6 and the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) policies which seek good design which improves the character and quality of an area.
11. Local Plan Policy CS1 cited by the Council is concerned with the Borough's place shaping strategy and as such is less pertinent to the consideration of this issue.

¹ Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance, 2013, paragraphs 14.34-14.35.

² Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document, 2012.

³ Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document, 2012.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area, contrary to the development plan, supplementary guidance and the Framework. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Geoff Underwood

INSPECTOR