

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2017

by Ray Wright BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 06 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/16/3165530

2 Scholars Close, Barnet EN5 2NB

- 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 Russel Fordham against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/6198/HSE was refused by notice dated 22 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is 'single storey back, front extensions & garage.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Some works in connection with the overall development have already taken place. However, I have assessed the proposal on the basis of the scheme depicted upon the submitted drawings.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The application relates to a modern two storey detached dwelling in a cul-de-sac of four similar properties.
 5. The Council raise no objections to the proposed single storey rear or single storey front extensions to the main dwelling. These appear to have been the subject of an earlier planning permission, and represent low key additions which remain subordinate to the main house. I, therefore, have no reason to disagree with the Council's assessment.
 6. The main outstanding issue relates to the alterations proposed to the detached garage. The Council indicate that due to its position and form the garage as proposed would not materially harm the living conditions of nearby occupiers. However, concerns are raised regarding its overall size and design.
 7. The National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) indicates there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It confirms, however, that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that development
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of poor design, which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, should be refused. Policy CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2012 (CS), together with Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) 2012 (DMP) require development to have a high quality design and to respect its local context and any distinctive local character. The Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance 2016 (SPD) provides more detailed guidance and indicates that extensions should normally be subordinate to the original house, respect the original building and should not be overly dominant.

8. This scheme involves a rear extension to the garage, the raising of the eaves and ridge line of its roof and the installation of a dormer window to its frontage.
9. The original garage had a pyramidal roof structure rising, at its highest, to the eaves line of the main house. A subsequent planning permission allowed for a reconfigured roof including a front dormer and a similar rear extension. However, the overall ridge height and form proposed would retain some subservience to the main house.
10. Whilst the design in this appeal follows that previously permitted, this scheme would result in a further increase in the height of the overall building, identified by the appellant as being around 0.6m. While this height increase is relatively limited it would result in a considerable addition to the overall bulk and mass of the building and add to its prominence within the development. This would be emphasised by the significantly expanded area of brickwork between the ground floor doors and raised eaves line, which would give the building a more 'top heavy' appearance, significantly altering the architectural balance between it and the main dwelling.
11. While the property is in a cul-de-sac containing a limited number of properties the visual relationship between the dwellings and associated garages is important to the integrity of the original design of the development. The building, as proposed, would lose its original subservient scale and appearance and create a far more imposing structure which would compete with the main house. I recognise that the increased height proposed would provide an enhanced space internally at first floor level. However, I do not regard this benefit as providing sufficient justification to outweigh the harm that I have identified. Nor would the rendering and painting of the rear of the garage, as put forward by the appellant, offset its wider visual impact.
12. In the circumstances the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area and therefore conflicts with the Framework, Policy CS5 of the CS, Policy DM01 of the DMP and SPD.

Conclusion

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

Ray Wright

INSPECTOR