

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27th March 2017

by Alison Roland BSc DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/T5150/D/17/3166892
21 Eversley Avenue, Wembley, HA9 9JZ.

- 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 Miarowski against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Brent.
 - The application Ref: 16/0539, dated 7 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2016.
 - The development proposed is a small extension above the kitchen. This extension would infill the back left corner of the house only. The external wall of the proposed extension will match the existing. The roof will be insulated and all roof tiles will be all replaced matching the existing, as required in the Barn Hill conservation area guideline.
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Procedural Matter

1. The description of the proposal cited in the header above is derived from the planning application forms. I consider a more accurate description is that adopted by the Council in their Decision Notice namely; First floor rear extension and alterations to the main roof, to include raising the height of the roof, replacement and relocation of top rooflight and replacement of roof tiles to dwellinghouse.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for first floor rear extension and alterations to the main roof, to include raising the height of the roof, replacement and relocation of top rooflight and replacement of roof tiles to dwellinghouse, at 21 Eversley Avenue, Wembley, HA9 9JZ, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: 16/0539, dated 7 February 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan: 1:1250@A4; Existing: 1:100@A3; Proposed Exterior: 1:100@A3; Existing-Floor Plans: 1:100@A3; Roof: 1:100@A3; Proposed Floor Plan: 1:100@A3.
 - 3) Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, further details of the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the extensions hereby
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approved, including the proposed replacement roof tiles, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to their use in the development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Barn Hill Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The appeal property comprises a detached dwelling in a mock tudor style situated in the CA. Like many of the surrounding houses, it features a projecting two storey gable to the front with the main hipped roof set back behind it to one side affording it an L-shaped configuration when viewed from the street. Whilst not all nearby houses are in the mock tudor style, there is a general commonality in form imparted by similar hipped roof forms and a common materials palette of red clay tiled roofs above muted red or brown brick, combined with white painted render to the walls.
5. The appeal proposal would see the existing ridge on the roof return behind the front gable, extended across the width of the property and the overall roof reconfigured from its existing articulated form to a simpler deeper hipped roof above the bulk of the property, rising to a crown at the apex. The existing inset on the rear elevation would be infilled to afford first floor accommodation.
6. The proposed roof alterations would increase the massing of the host property, but I do not consider they would appear bulky for the following reasons. Firstly, the resultant ridge line would be comparable to the highest point of the ridge on the roof return at present and as this element is set back from the projecting front gable, it would not appear unduly bulky or assertive. Moreover, the frontage of the appeal property is set back from the road relative to its neighbour No 23 and it also appears to have a slightly lower ridge line than that property. The latter also features a rather assertive projecting gable roof which oversails the bay windows below. In this context, the increased massing of the roof would not appear at all out of place.
7. In relation to the first floor rear infill extension, I note that the Barn Hill Conservation Area Design Guide (2013) generally seeks to limit the height of rear extensions to a maximum average of 3m, thereby generally precluding two storey extensions or as in this case, a first floor extension. However, the rear extension being an infill in part of an existing reveal, would appear as part of a unified whole with the remainder of the property, beneath a simpler unified roof form. As it would not project beyond the main rear elevation of the property and given its limited massing, I consider it would integrate comfortably with the host property and would have negligible impact on its overall proportions.
8. Thus, whilst the proposals would in their totality significantly increase the massing of the appeal property, for the reasons given, I do not consider this would render the property as a whole or indeed its roof, overly assertive or out of character with neighbouring dwellings. I have minor reservations at the loss of articulation to the roof, as the complex intersection of different roof forms is a feature of surrounding houses. However, I consider that the retention of the projecting gable would on balance, retain a sufficient degree of interest.

9. For these reasons, I conclude on the main issue that the proposals would integrate comfortably with the host property and would leave the character or appearance of the CA unharmed. I thus find no conflict with Policies DMP1 and DMP7 of the London Borough of Brent Local Plan Development Management Policies (November 2016), or Policy CP 17 of the London Borough of Brent Core Strategy (2010). These seek to secure good quality design in development proposals, that complements the locality, sustains and enhances the significance of heritage assets and protects the distinctive suburban character of Brent from inappropriate development.
10. Whilst not cited in the Decision Notice, the Council and the Barn Hill Residents Association express concern about the replacement of the roof tiles with [sic] *Marley Eternity Clay tiles*, with the Conservation Officer asserting there is no evidence they all need to be replaced or that replacements will match. However, I see no reason for the appellant to justify their replacement provided that they are of a suitable appearance and this matter can be dealt with by the imposition of a condition as suggested by the Council.
11. The Council also suggest conditions relating to the implementation of the proposal in accordance with the submitted plans and a standard matching materials condition. The former is necessary for the avoidance of doubt. The latter is inappropriate due to the mix of materials employed in the existing dwelling, which could create doubt about the finished appearance of the development. I shall instead amend the wording of the condition referred to in paragraph 10 above to provide certainty and secure a satisfactory external finish. The delegated report also suggested that were the development to be approved, the skylight in the crown roof should be of the conservation flush fitted type. However, given its discrete position at the apex of the crown roof, inset from its sides where it would be scarcely if at all visible, I consider this would be neither reasonable nor necessary.

Other Matters

12. The Barn Hill Residents Association suggest the proposal could lead to a loss of privacy to the occupants of 19 Eversley Avenue. However, that property had been largely demolished at the time of my visit. As the bedroom window in the rear extension would outlook down the appellant's garden (in place of the existing window in a similar position) and in the absence of further information, this is not a concern I share.

ALISON ROLAND

INSPECTOR