

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by D J Barnes MBA BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/17/3170161

17 Kingsmead, Barnet EN5 5AX

- 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 Henrik Wigernas against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 16/7598/HSE, dated 25 November 2017, was refused by notice dated 27 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is the conversion of roof space in a dwelling house to form habitable accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. It is considered that the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling situated within a predominantly residential area. There is a varied streetscene along Kingsmead comprising a mix of bungalows and 2-storey dwellings some of which have been extended. A hipped to gable roof extension, together with the erection of a rear dormer, has occurred at 19 Kingsmead which is the other dwelling forming this pair of semi-detached dwellings. The appeal property has already been altered by the erection of a 2-storey side addition with a hipped roof form. The proposed development includes a hipped to gable roof extension together with the erection of a rear dormer.
 4. Details of the alterations to other properties, especially their roofs, have not been available to me to determine whether they may have been granted permission by the Council or erected as permitted development. The fact that some larger dormers have been erected, including at No. 15, does not help the appellant's case because some of them exemplify poor design. Reference has also been made by the appellant to an appeal for near-by alterations to a dwelling's roof but no details have been provided for me to be able to give any material weight to this other scheme.
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5. By reason of the modest width of the previous side addition and the alterations to the roof of No. 19, the proposed hipped to gable roof extension would not materially unbalance the existing character and appearance of this pair of semi-detached dwellings. Accordingly, the design and bulk of this element of the proposed development would not result in an incongruous or visually dominant pair of semi-detached properties within the varied streetscene.
6. However, I share the Council's concerns associated with the scale and design of the proposed rear dormer which would occupy a substantial proportion of the further enlarged roof. Although it is recognised that it can only contain guidance, the scale and design of the proposed dormer would not accord with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: *Residential Design Guide* (RDG) concerning such extensions being subordinate and proportional additions to the roofs. Although not visible from the streetscene, the proposed dormer would be apparent from the rear gardens of the surrounding properties.
7. Further, the main part of the proposed dormer would be materially larger than the roof extension at No. 19. The subsidiary element required to provide access to the roofspace and the proposed bathroom would add to the overall bulk. By reason of scale, from the rear gardens the proposed dormer would significantly unbalance the appearance of this pair of semi-detached dwellings and this would be accentuated by the main part of the dormer not being set-up from the eaves level as required in the RDG. The use of tiles to match the roof would not mitigate the unacceptable harm which has been identified.
8. Although the hip to gable roof alterations could be acceptable, this element of the appeal scheme is demonstrably and significantly outweighed by the harm associated with the scale and the design of the proposed dormer. Accordingly, it is concluded that the proposed development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area and, as such, it would conflict with Policy CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan Core Strategy, Policy DM01 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of The London Plan and the RDG. Amongst other matters these policies require development to be of high quality design and they are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) core principle of securing high quality design.

Other Matters

9. Careful note has been taken of the appellant's claims about the family's need for additional accommodation but these personal circumstances are demonstrably and significantly outweighed by the harm which has been identified. Pre-application advice was sought from the Planning Officers but this can only be informal in nature and this appeal has been determined based upon the Council's formal decision. Accordingly, and taking into account all other matters including the presumption in favour of sustainable development, it is concluded that this appeal should be dismissed.

D J Barnes

INSPECTOR