
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2017

by C J Ford BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 1st August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/17/3172907
34 Greenway, Southgate, London 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 Pomphrey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 16/05061/HOU, dated 3 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 January 2017.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and outbuildings and erection of part single and part two storey side extensions.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council's reason for refusal specifically relates to the first floor side extension. This decision therefore focusses upon that matter.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the Meadway Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. As the appeal site is located within a Conservation Area (CA), it is necessary to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also sets out that Conservation Areas are designated heritage assets and that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
5. The Meadway Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2015 (the Appraisal), sets out that the general character of the area is a quiet residential enclave of linked roads with a limited range of detached and semi-detached house types set in streets with planted verges. The planning, layout and architectural style of the CA are influenced by the Arts and Crafts and Garden Suburbs movements.
6. It goes on to identify that one of the key factors that gives the CA its special interest is the backdrop of rear garden trees seen through gaps between the houses. It notes that where there are single storey garages, these often

- provide important views through the gaps to mature planting in the rear garden areas.
7. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached house with an attached single storey garage. The space above the garage typifies the gap and view emphasised by the Appraisal. Furthermore, as the house fronts a crossroads, the wide gap at the first floor level between the appeal property and No 18 Meadway, which is partly derived from an intervening gated right of way to allotments at the rear, makes a particularly important contribution to a feeling of spaciousness at a prominent location within the CA.
 8. The first floor element of the proposed scheme would be set well back from the front bay to the house and a gap at the first floor level between the flank of the extension and the side boundary would be retained. Owing to the tapering nature of the plot, the gap would reduce from around 1.8m at the front of the addition to approximately 1.3m at the rear.
 9. There are examples within the CA of extensions that have partially infilled the original first floor gap. It is evident they have significantly diminished the views of the mature planting in the rear garden areas and thereby harmfully undermined a key element of the original character of the properties and the CA's special interest.
 10. Similar harm would arise from the position, scale and width of the proposed first floor side extension. The encroachment of the existing wide gap between the appeal property and No 18 would also harmfully erode the existing sense of spaciousness found on the northern side of the visually prominent crossroads.
 11. The appellant states that the retained gap between the appeal property and No 18 would be greater than several recently approved schemes within the CA. The details of those extensions have not been provided and in any event, each development proposal must be considered on its own merits. It is also noted that the summary of the 2014 Review in the Appraisal comments that, 'the gaps between houses usually occupied by older single storey garages... are being filled in; this can be acceptable at a single storey, and extensions are generally limited in this way. Refusal of two storey side extensions has been upheld at appeal'.
 12. Paragraph 134 of the Framework specifies that where a development leads to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, as applies in this case, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the development. A benefit of the proposed scheme would be the provision of additional living accommodation, including a further bedroom through alterations to the existing internal layout. There would also be investment in the fabric and condition of the building. Nevertheless, it is considered that these benefits do not outweigh the identified harm.
 13. The proposed materials and the architectural detailing would be sympathetic to the existing character of the house. It is also noted the proposal represents a modified scheme from two previously refused by the Council¹, the latter also being dismissed at appeal². However, it is apparent from the findings above that the changes made are insufficient to make the revised scheme acceptable.

¹ Application Refs: 16/02031/HOU and 16/03522/HOU.

² Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/16/3164241.

14. It is therefore concluded that the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the Meadway CA. It would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would conflict with Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan 2016, Core Policy 30 and Core Policy 31 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010 and Policies DMD 13, DMD 37 and DMD 44 of the Enfield Development Management Document (DMD) 2014. Amongst other things, these policies seek to resist development that is inappropriate to its context, is not in keeping with the character of the property, or which fails to have appropriate regard to its surroundings. The policies also seek to conserve the significance of heritage assets.
15. The development would similarly conflict with the Meadway Conservation Area Management Proposals 2015 which emphasises that poorly designed extensions can damage the appearance of the houses and the grain and character of the area as a whole, particularly where they encroach on the gaps between the original houses.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

C J Ford

APPOINTED PERSON