



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2017

by Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC

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

Decision date: 05 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/17/3179539
51 Sunnyfield, Mill Hill, London NW7 4RE

- 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 Sunny Mirpuri against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 17/2786/HSE, dated 30 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is single storey rear extension, part two-storey, part single storey side extension, loft conversion with dormer windows to rear and Velux windows to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. On my site visit, I noted that the construction of an extension was under way at the appeal site, which appeared to correspond with the submitted proposed plans. However, as the extension was incomplete, I will treat the development as a proposal for the purposes of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is one of a pair of semi-detached properties located in a predominantly residential area. The Council's document entitled 'Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance' (SPD) sets out design principles for residential extensions. It states that proposed extensions should be consistent with the form, scale and architectural style of the original building, particularly where it is a period or suburban property.
5. The SPD advises that the height of an extension should normally be lower than that of the existing building, and that its front building line should be stepped in. In this case, the proposal would replace the side hipped roof with a new extension which would instead terminate with a gabled end. The ridge height of the proposed extension would match that of the existing ridge, thus failing to achieve visual subservience to the existing building. In departing from the simple hipped form, the development would result in an unsympathetic roof

- shape which would fail to reflect the original character of the appeal site and the house it adjoins.
6. The single storey element of the proposal would warp around the corner of the building, and its front elevation would run in line with the existing front line of the main house. At the first floor level, the front of the proposed first floor extension would also run in line with the existing elevation, which is recessed slightly. Taking these elements together, the proposal would fail to achieve sufficient setback from the front of No 51 to leave the original form of the house clearly legible. The first floor extension would also incorporate a small mono-pitched roof, which would form a visually awkward join with the proposed roof extension. The development would therefore dominate the appearance of No 51, to its detriment.
 7. The appellant states that some elements of the proposal could be built as permitted development, including the single storey rear and side extension and the roof extension. I have also been referred to an extant planning permission (Ref 15/03753/HSE) for a single storey rear and side extension. However, as the first floor extension would be omitted, it is evident that these alternatives would have less impact than the appeal scheme. I can therefore afford little weight to these fallback positions.
 8. Drawing all these factors together, I find that the proposal would fail to respect the proportions and style of the existing house. As a result, it would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would thus conflict with Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, insofar as it requires that all development should represent high quality design. It would also conflict with Policy CS1 of Barnet's Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CS), which amongst other things seeks the highest standards of urban design, and CS Policy CS5, insofar as it aims to ensure that development in Barnet respects local context. Finally, it would be at odds with the advice given in the SPD.
 9. I have been referred to the extension at 33 Sunnyfield, which was granted planning permission¹ in 2014. I note from the planning officer's report that the neighbour of No 33 already had a gabled roof, and so the proposal at No 33 was considered to balance this earlier extension. It therefore appears that that scheme does not represent a direct parallel to the scheme before me, and in any event, I am bound to consider the appeal proposal on its own merits.
 10. I accept that the proposal would not harm the living conditions of neighbouring residents. I have also taken into account the representations in support of the proposal. Nonetheless, these circumstances have not led me to a different conclusion on the main issue.
 11. For the reasons above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR

¹ H/02621/14