



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2017

by G Rollings BA(Hons) MA(UD) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10th January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/17/3181647

2 Selborne Gardens, Hendon, London, NW4 4SJ

- 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 Ayo Owolabi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 17/3260/FUL, dated 19 May 2017, was refused by notice dated 12 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is double storey side extensions and part double and part single storey rear extensions and the conversion of residential house into three self contained units.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - Whether the proposed development would provide satisfactory living conditions for the future occupiers of flat 3, with particular reference to outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site accommodates a semi-detached dwelling, located on a street corner. It is at the end of a row of similar semi-detached dwelling pairs, many of which have been the subject of hip-to-gable roof extensions and large rear-facing roof dormer additions. The proposed extension would extend both storeys of the building towards the rear and street side boundaries, with an additional ground floor extension projecting forward of the existing house, and a small rear-facing roof dormer addition, along with a larger side-facing dormer.
4. The site is unusual within the area, in that it is a corner property with a gap of land between the building and the side boundary, which borders a street. Guidance in the Council's adopted *Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance* (2016) (SPD), suggests that roof extensions should not form an overbearing element to a street or appear out of character

within the streetscape. When viewed from the front and rear, the semi-detached pair of the appeal site and its neighbour at 4 Selborne Gardens is asymmetrical, due to the previous extensions to No. 4. The lower roofline of the appeal extension gives the impression of an overall subordination of the side and rear elements of the extension, compared with the main dwelling. As such, despite the large nature of the extension, the original building would remain dominant and the extension would not appear overlarge.

5. I acknowledge the Council's concerns about the proximity of the extension to the side boundary of the site, as well as the proportions of the proposed side-facing dormer. However, the existing dwelling already creates an existing 'pinchpoint' in the generally open nature of the street in this corner location, and the infilling of the small gap is unlikely to exacerbate this to a degree that additional harm would be caused to the street scene.
6. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character or appearance of the site and surrounding area. There would be no conflict with *Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy)* (2012) Policies CS1 and CS5, and *Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies)* (2012) (DMP) Policy DM01, which together require development to provide high quality design that protects the character of the area, amongst other considerations.

Living conditions

7. The space above the existing and proposed first floor would be used as a self-contained flat (flat 3). With the exception of the proposed rear and side dormers, the 'open-plan' flat would be served by roof windows, which would be set within and parallel with the roof slope.
8. The proposed roof windows would allow light into the dwelling but seldom allow a good level of outlook from within, due to their slope and positioning. The outlook offered is rarely comparable with conventional vertically set windows. The proposed side dormer window would be set above the level of the adjacent stairs, and the proposed rear dormer window would be narrow; only the latter would enable a directly adjacent outlook from within the flat, and this would be limited to only a small portion of its floorspace. From most other parts of the flat, the outlook would be limited.
9. Outlook is a necessary component of appropriate living conditions, as it assists in reducing any sense of enclosure and achieving the *National Planning Policy Framework's* aim of providing well-designed and welcoming homes. This is not the case in this instance. I acknowledge the appellant's comment that the window within the proposed rear dormer could be widened, and directed as such by way of a planning condition were I to allow the appeal. However, this would not improve the outlook within most of the flat, and is therefore unsuitable.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not provide appropriate living conditions for future residents, with particular reference to outlook. It would not comply with DMP Policies DM01 and DM02, which require appropriate standards of development, to achieve satisfactory living conditions, amongst other factors.

Other issues

11. The appellant mentioned that the provision of new flats would have a positive effect on the local housing supply. Although I agree, the benefit gained from the addition of a small number of flats would be minor, and does not mitigate the harm that I have identified with regard to living conditions.

Conclusion

12. Although I have found that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area, this is outweighed by my concerns over the unsatisfactory outlook that would be provided for future occupiers of flat 3, and the resulting harm to living conditions. Accordingly, for the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Rollings

INSPECTOR