

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 August 2019

by Conor Rafferty LLB (Hons), AIEMA, Solicitor (Non-practising)

Decision by A U Ghafoor BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/19/3230424

22 Southbourne Crescent, Hendon, London, NW4 2JY

- 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 and Mrs Simmons against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet
 - The application Ref 19/1436/HSE, dated 12 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a single storey side extension and relocation of existing front door and new entrance steps.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the building and the street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site is located on the inner bend of the curved road. It comprises a two-storey end of street semi-detached dwelling house with a porch and entrance door on the side elevation and a garage to the rear. Due to its corner plot location the site benefits from land to the front, side and rear. The immediate surroundings are characterised by similar residential dwellings which differ slightly in style but retain a broad uniformity in terms of architecture, materials and character.
5. The proposal relates to the erection of a single storey extension along the entire length of the side elevation of the property, which would protrude from the front elevation of the current building line. It is proposed that the entrance door would be moved to the front elevation and accessed via a new set of steps. The Council's reason for refusal does not specifically reference the relocation of the door or installation of new steps but refers in general terms to the single storey side extension.

6. The proposal would introduce a sizeable feature that would be inconsistent with the traditional character of the host building and would visually harm its external appearance. Due to the fact that the extension would run the entire length of the property, it would add to the width of the front elevation when viewed from the street. This would appear disproportionate in the context of the building itself but would also affect the current sense of coherence with the neighbouring dwelling. It is recognised that the garage currently situated on the appeal site also runs the entire depth of the property but due to its separated and screened positioning at the bottom of the garden, this does not appear unduly dominant from the street.
7. The prominent corner location of the site means that the proposal would be highly visible along the immediate streetscape at both the front and side elevations of the property. The fencing present on the side boundary of the site, along with the existing garage, would provide a certain amount of screening but the scale of the extension would nonetheless be experienced alongside neighbouring dwellings, particularly at the side elevation. In this context it would appear as an incongruous feature due to its visual dominance on the street scene.
8. The Council refers in general terms to the Supplementary Planning Document on Residential Design Guidance dated October 2016 (the SPD) but does not point to a specific section of the document. The SPD does make reference to first floor side extensions on corner sites and states that they should not project beyond the building line of the adjoining road. While the extension would protrude from the front elevation of the building line, the proposal is for a ground floor side extension only. Further, while the Council states that other side extensions in the area do not protrude than the front property line, no further information is provided on this point. The appellant has also referred to other side extensions within the vicinity but limited further information has been provided on the nature of these developments or their comparability to the current proposal. In any event, this proposal should be assessed on its own site-specific circumstances.
9. The SPD also states that side extensions should not measure more than half the width of the original house and welcomes pitched roofs on single storey side extensions to help such development fit within the street. It is recognised that the proposal corresponds with these elements of the SPD, but that the SPD is guidance rather than policy, and that other factors can allow for departure from this guidance. It is not considered that the fact that the proposal accords with these elements of the SPD is sufficient to outweigh the harm identified above.
10. The proposal would result in a negative effect on the host dwelling and its setting and in doing so I find that the proposal would have a visually harmful effect upon the character and appearance of the host building and surrounding area. Accordingly, it would conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document dated September 2012 and Policy DM01 of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document dated September 2012.

Other considerations

11. The appellant has stated that the current fence at the side boundary of the site will be replaced with new timber fencing of the same height to partially screen the development. However, the appellant argues that under permitted development rights such fencing could in fact measure up to two metres in height and be made from a variety of materials, including brick. It is contended that this would have a more detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene than the side extension. The erection of this fencing or wall along the boundary does not form part of the proposal for which permission is sought. In any event there is not a greater than theoretical possibility that the erection of such permitted development structures would occur, and therefore, little weight can be given to this argument.
12. The appellant further states that the proposal would be the first addition to the original fabric of the building, albeit it appears that a loft conversion is currently being undertaken. However, this does not negate the harm identified.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. Having had regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rafferty

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I too agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

A U Ghafoor

INSPECTOR