



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 November 2019

by Alison Scott BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/19/3237086

85 Ridge Road, Southgate N21 3EL

- 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 Ms. D Newby against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 18/02712/FUL, dated 6 July 2018, was refused by notice dated 29 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as the demolition of garage and construction of new 2-storey 3-bed house in a newly formed plot in the rear garden of 85 Ridge Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application form describes the site as 85 Ridge Road. However, more accurately, the site is land to the rear of 85 and 87 Ridge Road. The full name of the appellant is taken from the appeal form as it was incomplete on the original planning application form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and
 - The effect of the development on the living conditions of occupiers of 6 Solna Road with particular regard to privacy and the future occupiers of the development in regard to outlook and daylight.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site is an 'L' shape piece of land approximately 104sq.m in size and forms part of the domestic rear garden of 85 Ridge Road. It contains a small garage with access onto Solna Road. The houses on Solna Road consist of two storey, semi-detached houses that have long rear gardens and are of two slightly differing designs that alternate along the length of the street. Although there are minor variations in the design, common materials, fenestration patterns, projecting ground floor bay windows, bracketed canopies and

prominent chimneys, are present on all of the houses, which results in a highly consistent appearance and character to the street.

5. The proposed dwelling would be detached, flat roofed and would wrap around the rear of the adjacent electricity substation. Its design would bear little reference to design cues from the articulation of other dwellings along Solna Road, to which it would be closely related.
6. Predominantly red and buff coloured brick, or rendered finishes exists within the local vernacular. In contrast the proposed material of off-white facing brick, would harmfully jar with the street scene. Also, apart from the pattern of window order, the proposed fenestration detail would display little resemblance to the adjacent dwellings which comprise of decorative stone mullions and expressive framing.
7. The proposed eaves line closest to 6 Solna Road would carry through as a flat roof for the new dwelling is proposed. However, it would be at odds with a street of houses of hipped roofs that includes pitched gable ends to front elevations, and in addition, where detached domestic garages and the sub-station also follows this characteristic roofing pattern.
8. The proposed use of a herringbone pattern of red brickwork with a flat roofed appearance to the projecting ground floor frontage, is intended to form a modern interpretation of the original bay windows and entrances. However, it would not harmonise with the existing street scene.
9. Furthermore, although the proposed building line would correspond with that of the street, the metal railings above the front wall boundary treatment would not accord with the largely uniform brick and pillars and low railings of other properties in the locality.
10. The proposed design of the new dwelling would be contemporary in appearance, however, as presented, the dwelling would not be in keeping with the consistent design, character and appearance of dwellings in the area. As a consequence, the proposal would appear as an incongruous addition that would not sit comfortably within the existing street scene but would instead be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
11. I have been presented with examples of other new build in-fill housing, but I am not aware of the precise planning circumstances for these, and furthermore, they are not local to the appeal site. However, and in any event, there is no comparable development to draw reference to, and I have determined this proposal on its own individual merits.
12. I therefore find that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would not reinforce local distinctiveness in line with Policy CP30 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 (CS); or Policy DMD 37 of the Enfield Development Management Document 2014 (DMD) which seeks a high standard of design that takes account of local context and character, including other objectives.

Living Conditions of Future Occupiers

13. A garden is proposed to the rear of the dwelling together with additional long narrow spaces along the boundaries of the plot, and the front outdoor space. Most space would be impractical to be considered as garden space due to its

size and location, or the lack of privacy that would ensue. Therefore, I discount these spaces as quality external space. At approximately 21sq m, the only useful garden space to the rear of the dwelling would fall short of meeting the aspirations of the Council's DMD Policies DMD 8 and DMD 9 to provide high quality amenity space for a three bedroom dwelling. It would also fail to comply with Policy 3.5 of the London Plan for development to be of highest quality externally, including the London Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance to provide an acceptable standard of private outdoor space.

14. I have considered the effect of the proposal on the internal living conditions of the future occupiers in respect of outlook and light. Outlook from a number of habitable rooms would be towards the boundary fence in close proximity, and this outlook would feel very enclosed given the close relationship, therefore harmful to the occupiers living conditions. I am however satisfied that the habitable rooms would gain an acceptable standard of light according to the appellant's Average Daylight Factor calculations as there are large windows or multiple windows serving habitable rooms.
15. Taking matters into account, the proposal would comply in part with the general aims of CS Policy 30 and DMD Policy DMD 8 to preserve amenity in terms of sun light, but not in terms of outlook, and not in respect of Policy 3.5 of the London Plan for housing developments to be of highest quality internally, including the general aims of the London Housing SPG in this regard.

Living Conditions of Occupiers of 6 Solna Road

16. Two side windows serving a living space of the proposed dwelling would look towards the boundary treatment with No. 6. The boundary treatment would be sufficient to prevent a sense of overlooking from these windows. Similarly, No. 6 has two side windows within the rear return of the house serving a kitchen, which currently overlooks the existing boundary treatment. Whilst the development would be around 4m away from these windows, I agree with the appellant that the outlook from this window would not be significantly compromised by the proposal as it would be only slightly higher than the existing fence, with an otherwise open aspect. To this end, I do not find the proposal would be in conflict with DMD Policy DMD 8 in its criteria to preserve amenity. I find no part of Policy DMD 7 to be relevant to test against the living conditions of these occupiers.

Other Matters

17. The loss of a garage and on-street parking congestion has been brought to my attention. The proposed development would have no off-street parking and would rely upon on-street parking. The Council's Transport Planner has not raised parking as an issue but instead comment that the reinstatement of the dropped kerb would create a new on-street car parking space. Therefore, no net loss of parking would occur as a result of this development.
18. Concern has also been raised by adjoining neighbours at 87 and 83 Ridge Road regarding the effect of the proposed development on their living conditions, to which I have given careful consideration. The proposed dwelling would inevitably be visible from the rear of the dwelling and garden of No. 87 beyond the existing garage. The garden area is long, and the proposed dwelling would be located approximately 18m from the back of their dwelling. Given this, together with its height and scale, I do not consider the proposed dwelling

would cause a loss of privacy or overshadowing that would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers. For the same reasons, I consider the proposal would not adversely harm the living conditions of the occupiers of 83 Ridge Road in respect of privacy or loss of light.

19. The proposed dwelling is regarded as sustainable by the appellant, although I have no precise evidence before me to substantiate this claim. Whilst the proposal exceeds national and local minimum spacing standards, which weighs in favour of the scheme, this does not overcome the concerns I have identified above.
20. I have had regard to other matters brought to my attention including the pre-application service undertaken, the need to protect electrical apparatus, provision of in-curtilage cycle parking, and the appellants belief that the plot was originally intended for housing. However, I am not persuaded to allow the appeal given the harm I have identified.
21. Issues pertaining to communication between the Council and other parties, and house values are not matters for me to comment upon. With regard to whether the development would create a precedent, each proposal should be considered on a case by case basis in light of its individual context. I have also had regard to matters relating to the health conditions of neighbouring occupants and land contamination issues, brought to my attention. However, as the proposal is dismissed for other reasons, it is not necessary to comment further.

Conclusion

22. Bringing all matters together, I have found that no harm would arise to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers of 6 Solna Road, 83 or 87 Ridge Road as well as in part to the internal living conditions of future occupiers of the development. I have considered the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, and on the standard of external living space that would serve future occupiers, and do not find in favour of the proposal. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR