



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 January 2020

by Neil Smith BA Hons BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/T5150/W/19/3240483

Rear of 9 Connaught Road, London NW10 9AJ

- 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 43 Richmond Road Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Brent.
 - The application Ref 19/2511, dated 10 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of existing shed and erection of 2 x 1 bed houses.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located to the rear of 9 Connaught Road, a three-storey property which has been converted into flats. The land has a frontage onto Acton Lane with vehicular access. It is separated from No 9 by a low retaining wall with a timber fence above to the rear and there are tall timber fences which form the side boundaries with the neighbouring properties. The site is approximately one storey lower than No 9. A single-storey building occupies part of the site with an open yard area occupying the remainder.
4. There are garden areas on either side of the appeal site which serve the neighbouring properties. Whilst there are a number of advertisement hoardings which front onto Acton Lane, the site and the adjoining land is open in character. The properties in the vicinity are a mix of traditionally designed semi-detached properties. There is also a four-storey block of flats occupying a triangular plot at the junction with Acton Lane and Connaught Road. The properties are set within generous plots and are set back from the road allowing front and rear garden areas.
5. The appeal proposal is for the erection of a two-storey building which would provide a pair of semi-detached, one-bedroom dwellings. The appellant states that the proposal is an innovative design of the utmost quality with a 'hint of art nouveau' which would employ a green dome shaped roof. The

National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) confirms that great importance should be attached to the design of the built environment. As part of this innovation, originality and initiative should not be stifled and the appellant argues that the proposal would be seen as a positive addition to the street scene. However, the Framework also indicates that it is proper to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness, but the proposal would not do this.

6. The bulk and form of the proposed building would sit uncomfortably against a backdrop of larger buildings of traditional design, due to its green dome shaped roof, which would be set back from the ground floor elevation to allow amenity space at the first-floor level. The fenestration pattern and proposed materials would also be in marked contrast to the surroundings and would be jarring elements compared to the existing buildings in the street.
7. It would further contrast to the surrounding properties as the building would occupy virtually the entire plot. It would be built up to the rear boundary and be approximately 1.5 metres from the rear wall of No 9; be set in from the side boundaries allowing only a slither of landscaping; and would be in close proximity with the road frontage allowing space for bin stores and two planters.
8. Overall, the appeal proposal would appear as a cramped form of development with the resultant building occupying a large proportion of the site in very close proximity to the adjoining properties. It would therefore be, by reason of its excessive site coverage, bulk and massing and design, out of character with the prevailing pattern of development in the street scene and the surrounding area.
9. The appellant states that there would be no harm to the living conditions of either the future occupiers and the occupiers of the neighbouring properties. I have also taken into consideration that the proposal would be a car free development and that the dwellings would incorporate other elements of sustainable design. I have also had regard to the pre-application advice which related to a proposal with a different design to this appeal. None of these matters either alter or outweigh the harm identified.
10. The proposal would be unacceptably harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene and locality. The proposal conflicts with Policy DMP 1 of the London Borough of Brent Local Plan, Development Management Plan (November 2016) and the guidance contained within the London Borough of Brent Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 1 (November 2018) which require, amongst other things, development to be of a design that complements the locality.

Conclusions

11. For the reasons above the appeal is dismissed.

Neil Smith

INSPECTOR