
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 January 2020

by R E Jones BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th January 2020.

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/19/3238926
87A Ashurst Road, North Finchley N12 9AU

- 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 Newman against the decision of Barnet London Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/2832/FUL, dated 25 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is for the extension to roof including hip to gable and 1 No rear dormer with Juliette balcony.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect the development would have on the character and appearance of the host property, the terrace of properties and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises one of two flats located in the end property of a short two storey residential terrace. The appeal property and the corresponding end dwelling in the terrace each incorporates a hipped roof. The neighbouring pair of semi-detached dwellings in the sequence of properties, at Nos 89 and 91 Ashurst Road also share a hipped roof arrangement. When viewed together from the street the terrace and semi-detached dwellings have a pleasing symmetrical and balanced appearance.
4. 'Hip to gable' roof extensions and large rear dormers are present on a number of properties in the surrounding area. However, from my observations, where I saw gable roof extensions, often these would unbalance an adjoining hipped roof property. The rear of the appeal property along with others in this part of Ashurst Road, are visible from an access lane that runs along their rear garden boundaries. From here I noted that large rear dormers, had, in the main, their roofs and cheeks marginally set down and in from the main roof of the property, exposing the profile of the main roof structure.
5. Given that the other end property in the terrace has not been extended, the proposed gabled roof would appear awkward and unbalanced, a point that would be exaggerated by the additional scale and bulk associated with the proposed rear dormer it would adjoin. Moreover, the rear dormer would

completely dominate the rear roof slope of the property, in contrast to neighbouring rear dormer extensions that are proportionately more sympathetic to the profile of the main roof. In light of the position of the property in the street with its flank elevation visible, along with the views from the access lane, the proposal would have a particularly visible and dominant appearance.

6. Overall in the context of the alterations to the roof form, I conclude that they would result in an unbalanced, bulky and awkward appearance harmful to the appearance of the existing property. Given the prominent position of the appeal property in the street and the relative balance of surrounding properties this would be harmful to the appearance of the street scene and the general character of the area.
7. An example of a similar development has been referred to at No 65 Ashurst Road, which the appellant considers complies with the Council's design guidance. However, I have not been given the full details of this case, whether it received planning permission and if it did what policies and guidance it was considered against. On this basis I am unable to draw a direct comparison with the appeal proposal, however, in any event I must consider the appeal scheme on its own merits.
8. Considered in the context of the host property, the terrace of buildings of which it is part and the wider streetscape, the combined effect of the proposals would have a harmful effect on their character and appearance. Whilst the proposal may not conflict with every one of their criteria it would nevertheless be contrary to London Plan Policy 7.4, Core Strategy¹ Policies CS1 and CS5 and Development Management Policies² Policy DM01. Together these require development to protect and respect local character and context, and demonstrate high quality design.
9. Furthermore, the proposal would not accord with Council guidance³ which supports those policies. In particular this advises that 'hip to gable' extensions should not unbalance a pair of semi-detached or short terrace of properties, nor appear out of character within the streetscape. It goes on to advise that dormers should be subordinate features on the roof and not occupy more than half the width or depth of the roof slope, and that rear extensions should not look too bulky and prominent compared with the main building.

Other Matters

10. The appellant contends that the proposals would be permitted development if the property was a house, whilst the end property in the terrace could construct a similar roof extension. However, even if the appellant is correct on her interpretation of the permitted development position, the property comprises two flats, while I have no evidence that the end property has any intention or permission to extend. Therefore, such a theoretical scenario does not offer a compelling justification in favour of allowing the appeal.
11. The proposal would have the benefit of providing an additional bedroom which would contribute to delivering a choice of homes in the area, which is an approach supported by national and development plan policies. However,

¹ Barnet's Local Plan, Core Strategy, Development Plan Document, September 2012

² Barnet's Local Plan, Development Management Policies, Development Plan Document, September 2012

³ Supplementary Planning Document - Residential Design Guidance, October 2016

these benefits would be limited and would not outweigh the considerable harm the proposal would cause to character and appearance.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property, the pair of semi-detached properties and the area contrary to the London Plan, the development plan and the SPD. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

R.E. Jones

INSPECTOR