
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2020

by K Savage BA MPlan MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/3241430
72 Games Road, Barnet EN4 9HT

- 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 & Mrs Ajay & Bhavna Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 19/5004/HSE, dated 27 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 1 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is 'single storey rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear extension and roof extension involving rear dormer window, at 72 Games Road, Barnet EN4 9HT, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 19/5004/HSE, dated 27 August 2019, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: EX 01 and PL01 Rev A.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plan PL01 Rev A.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the Monken Hadley Conservation Area (the MHCA).

Reasons

3. The MHCA encompasses the village of Monken Hadley to its western end and extends eastwards to include large tracts of common land. The appeal site forms part of an outlying cluster of development within the MHCA at the eastern end of the common land surrounding Ludgrove Hall, a locally listed building dating from the 1830s around which a group of 8 large, detached dwellings have been constructed. The Council's Conservation Area Appraisal (2007) (the CAA) describes the character of Monken Hadley as deriving from a long association with a predominantly rural society, evident in the historical buildings, large areas of rough poorly drained common land, winding lanes and scattered groups of oaks and other native trees.

4. Games Road forms Area 9 within the CAA which describes it as part of an ancient bridleway providing legibility through the area, with dwellings along the south side of Games Road helping to frame the common land. The CAA describes the dwellings surrounding Ludgrove Hall as 'untypical and unsympathetic in this location due to their cul-de-sac style arrangement and feeling of enclosure from perimeter treatments.' It further indicates that the development fails to reflect the mainly open and informal character and appearance of the conservation area.
5. The proposed development would be to the rear of the dwelling. Given the tall boundary treatments, and that neighbouring dwellings to either side are orientated slightly away from the appeal site, the proposed rear extension and dormer would not be readily visible from other parts of the MHCA and would have no effect on the significance of Ludgrove Hall. There would be visibility from the building to the rear in Somercoates Close, which lies outside of the MHCA, but this is filtered by tall boundary trees, even when not in leaf as at the time of my visit.
6. In respect of the rear dormer, the Council refers to its Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (October 2016) (the RDG) which indicates that dormer windows should be no more than half the width or depth of the roof slope, the former of these measurements being at issue here. An accurate measurement of this is difficult given the hipped form and several discrete sections which make up the overall roof. However, it is clear from the plans that the dormer would be located to the centre of the main section of the roof, inset from both sides, from the eaves and from the main ridge. Relative to the whole roofscape of the building, it would be modest in size and proportionate in position, and would accord with the thrust of the RDG.
7. I note the Council's view that no other examples of similar dormer windows exist to the other dwellings in the group, whilst those at Ludgrove Hall are far smaller and form a repeated feature of the building. However, having found it to acceptable in terms of its size and position, and given its location in a discreet position to the rear of the dwelling, I find that the rear dormer would not be a harmful addition to the building or have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the MHCA.
8. The rear extension would infill part of a recessed section of the rear elevation, lining through with the central projecting section. It would be modest in its overall size relative to the significant width of the overall building, and whilst its flat roof design would be more contemporary in form than the style of the existing building, it would be discreet in its position at rear ground floor level and would not compromise the overall aesthetic of the building.
9. The extension of the glazing further across the rear elevation would create a more significant void, and would result in the central wing lacking solidity to its base. However, viewed as a whole, the rear elevation would still retain substantial areas of solid brickwork to either side of the glazing and its traditional fenestration would still predominate across the building. The glazing would contrast but would not conflict with the traditional form of the building, and given its limited visibility, modest scale and lightweight form, the extension would not adversely affect the appearance of the building, nor its contribution to the significance of the MHCA.

10. For these reasons, I find that the proposed rear extension and dormer window would preserve the character and appearance, and heritage significance of, the MHCA, and would thus accord with Policies CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2012) and Policies DM01 and DM06 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (September 2012), which together seek to create a quality environment that respects local context and distinctive local character; to protect Barnet's heritage and character, including protecting heritage assets in line with their significance, and to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Barnet's conservation areas, locally listed buildings, and open spaces of historic significance. Nor would there be conflict with the guidance of the RDG or CAA.
11. No objection was raised by the Council in respect of the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbouring occupants, and no public comments have been received. Having seen the site for myself, I have no reason to reach a different view to the Council in these respects.

Conditions

12. To provide certainty, a condition is required specifying the relevant drawings. It is also necessary to impose a condition requiring external surface materials to match those described on the plans in order to preserve the character and appearance of the MHCA.

Conclusion

13. For the foregoing reasons, I conclude that the proposal accords with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations which indicate a decision should be taken at variance with this. The appeal is therefore allowed.

K Savage

INSPECTOR