



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 June 2020

by Peter Mark Sturgess BSc (Hons), MBA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Decision date: 26th June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/20/3244827

24 Ridge Hill, Golders Green, London, NW11 8PS

- 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 Paulomi Yusef against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 19/5413/HSE, dated 4 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing front, rear and side dormer roof extensions. Erection of 2 storey side, single storey rear and part two storey rear extension. Installation of roof lights on the rear and side roof slopes. Installation of ramp for wheelchair access. Installation of steps at the front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission granted for the removal of existing front, rear and side dormer extensions. Erection of 2 storey side, single storey rear and part two storey rear extension. Installation of roof lights on the rear and side roof slopes. Installation of ramp for wheelchair access. Installation of steps at the front at 24 Ridge Hill, Golders Green, London NW11 8PS, in accordance with the terms of the planning application Council ref: 19/5413/HSE dated 4 October 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents submitted with the application: P-100; P-101; P-102; P-103; P-104; P-105; P-106; P-107; P-108; P-109; P-110, and the Planning Statement and site location plan.
 - 3) The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the extension shall match those used on the existing dwelling.
 - 4) Before the extension hereby permitted is first brought into use the proposed window in the flank elevation facing No 22 Ridge Hill shall be glazed with obscure glass only and shall be permanently retained as such thereafter and shall be permanently fixed shut with only a fanlight opening.
 - 5) Notwithstanding the provisions of any development order made under Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order) no windows or doors, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be placed at any time in the

flank elevations of the extension hereby permitted, facing Nos 22 and 26 Ridge Hill.

- 6) The roof of the rear single storey extension hereby permitted shall only be used in connection with the repair and maintenance of the building and shall at no time be converted to or used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity or sitting out area.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are: 1) the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area; 2) the effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring properties at Nos 22 and 26 Ridge Hill in terms of outlook and light.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Ridge Hill is a suburban street characterised by large, semi-detached houses with a mixture of gable and hip roofs. No 24 is around halfway along the road on the left-hand side, when approaching from the A41. It is elevated above the roadway and is at a higher level than the next-door property at No 26. At the front it has a projecting two storey bay window under a hipped roof. A two-storey extension with a flat roof is situated at the side between it and No 26. At the rear there is a flat roofed single storey extension which extends across the width of the property. As well as the side and rear extensions the house has three large box dormers at the side, rear and front.
4. The appeal proposal would improve the appearance of the house by removing the existing discordant elements of the two-storey flat roofed side extension and the three box dormers. These features currently detract from the character and appearance of the property and the locality. Their replacement with a two-storey side and rear extension with a similar roof pitch to the host property would improve the character and appearance of the house and better reflect the overall character and appearance of the street.
5. The Council have argued that an extension, level with the front wall of the existing house at the ground floor, located on the boundary with No 26 would create a 'terracing effect' by closing the visual gap between the two properties. I don't consider a 'terracing effect' would be created by the appeal proposal in this instance. The neighbouring property at No 26 is set in front of the appeal property, the host property has and would continue to have a hipped roof, whereas the neighbouring property has a gabled roof and is also set lower down. Therefore, with the proposed extension in place, when viewed from the street, these features would clearly identify it as being physically separate from its neighbour. The visual relationship between Nos 24 and 26 is defined more by the difference in levels, the differences in their roof shapes and their relationship with the street, than the separation distance between them. Whilst gaps between buildings are common on Ridge Hill they do not, in most cases, allow views between the properties. In the case of No24 there is an existing two storey side extension which prevents this.
6. The Council has further contended that by proposing to extend the main ridge this unbalances the front elevations of the semi-detached houses (Nos 24 and 22) and would be a visually disproportionate addition to the property. The main

ridge of the appeal property is set back from the street and is elevated well above street level. The proposed extension to it would almost be wholly obscured from street level by the projecting two storey bay windows and their hipped roof. The oblique views of the proposed extended ridge line would not be seen in the context of the building as a whole. Therefore, the proposed difference in the length of the ridge line on the pair of semi-detached houses would not be readily apparent when viewed from the street. This would mean that the overall impact of the proposed extended main ridge line when viewed from the street would be minimal.

7. The parts of the development plan upon which the Council has relied in order to support its decision are Barnet's Adopted Core Strategy 2012 (CS) and Barnet's Adopted Development Management Policies 2012 (DMP). It has also referenced the Adopted Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) of 2016.
8. Policies CS1 and CS5 of the CS both seek to create a quality environment, protect local character and distinctiveness. I consider that the appeal proposal conforms with these policies as it would lead to the removal of features that detract from the local character, the box dormers and the two-storey, flat roof side extension, and replace them with features more sympathetic to the local area. The proposed extension with its hipped roof similar in pitch to that of the main house is more typical of housing styles in the locality. The DMP Policy DM01 largely repeats the aims of the Policies set out in the CS. Therefore, I find that the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies of the development plan.
9. The SPD is guidance and has to be applied to each individual case. The proposed extension in terms of the 'set back' required for the front wall and its failure to maintain the required gap between it and its boundary, does not accord with the guide. However, I consider that the appeal proposal meets the overall aim of the SPD. It would lead to the construction of an extension that, in other respects – the pitch of its roof, its overall width in relation to the existing house and the new hipped roof being set below the main roof – would assist in maintaining harmony and consistency with the form, scale and architectural style of the original building. This adds weight to my view that the appeal proposal conforms with the Policies of the development plan.

Living Conditions

10. No 24 already has rear extensions at ground and first floor that extends beyond the rear wall of the original property on the boundary with No 26. This includes the two-storey flat roof side extension approximately 6m in height. The appeal proposal would extend the amount of two storey development on this boundary by less than 2m. In addition, the vertical height of the proposed extension (ground to eaves) would be approximately 5m, less than the height of the existing flat roofed extension. Beyond that the pitched roof of the proposed extension would slope away from the boundary. No 26 itself has a single storey rear extension which extends outwards, approximately as far as the end of the existing two-storey flat roofed extension on the appeal site.
11. The Policy DM01 states, amongst other things, that development proposals should be designed to allow for adequate daylight, sunlight, privacy and outlook for adjoining and potential occupiers and users. There is already a two-storey extension on the boundary of the appeal site with its neighbour at No

26, which is higher in that location than the proposed extension. No 26 has an outlook over a sizeable rear garden and this would not change with the construction of the proposed extension. The proposed first floor of the extension does project beyond the existing two-storey rear extension, but by less than 2m. I do not consider that the addition of this small length of two storey extension would have a significant effect on the amount of daylight received or outlook of the occupiers of No 26, nor would it appear more materially overbearing or create a heightened sense of enclosure, than the existing two storey flat roof extension. I find no conflict between this Policy and the appeal proposal.

Conditions

12. I have included the standard conditions the Council has suggested, relating to time limits for the commencement of development and, for the avoidance of doubt, a condition referencing the approved plans. In addition to these conditions I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council and included a condition to ensure that the materials of the proposed extension match those of the existing house to ensure that it harmonises with the area. I have also added a condition requiring that the window in the two-storey element of the rear extension, facing No 22, to be fixed shut and obscure glazed to protect their living conditions. Given the proximity of the proposed two-storey rear extension to the boundaries of the property I have also imposed the suggested condition preventing the installation of flank windows in the side elevations of the proposed extension to protect the living conditions of the adjacent residential occupiers. There is a potential that the flat roof of the rear single storey extension could be used as a balcony/sitting out area. That could harm the living conditions of the occupiers of both the adjacent properties. I have therefore included the Council's condition, amended for clarity to ensure that this is properly controlled.

Conclusion

13. I find that having regard to all matters before me, including the policies of the development plan, when taken as a whole, the appeal should be allowed, and planning permission granted.

Peter Mark Sturgess

INSPECTOR