
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2020

by L Page BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26th June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/20/3245434

101 Russell Lane, Whetstone, London N20 0AZ

- 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 Haikesh Sharma against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 19/4292/HSE, dated 1 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of two-storey side and rear extension and single storey rear extension (including relocation of entrance to front).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of two-storey side and rear extension and single storey rear extension (including relocation of entrance to front) at 101 Russell Lane, Whetstone, London N20 0AZ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/4292/HSE, dated 1 August 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to conditions in the attached Schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The site is in an area largely residential in character, with dwellings of varying styles. There are several examples of other dwellings that are similar in appearance to the host dwelling; semi-detached with prominent shared central pitched roof. Some of these dwellings appear to be as originally built and are symmetrical in appearance. Others appear as if they have been extended to the side and the rear. Where extensions have not emerged in tandem, the dwellings become asymmetrical in appearance. This is particularly apparent at the dwellings directly opposite the site.
4. Whilst an asymmetrical appearance is not harmful in itself, where dwellings are symmetrical dwellings, they provide a more well balanced positive contribution to the overall appearance of the built form. In this case the host dwelling appeared as originally built but its attached neighbour had been extended. Consequently, the pair of dwellings were asymmetrical in appearance.

5. The Council refers to a number of design standards but does not provide unequivocal assessment as to whether it thinks the proposal precisely accords with them or not. Instead it has relied on broader, less prescriptive and more qualitative assessment of character and appearance in shaping its decision.
6. From my assessment of this proposal the development would introduce extensions that are broadly subordinate to the host dwelling, with the existing ridge line and width being largely respected. Even though there is an increase in scale, the development would achieve symmetry and balance between the host dwelling and its neighbour. This would mitigate any negative perceptions of bulk or overbearing qualities that may have existed if the proposal was carried out in isolation.
7. The development would extend the host dwelling in a similar way to the neighbouring dwelling, creating symmetry and balance between them. Consequently, the development would benefit the character and appearance of the area and should be viewed positively.
8. Overall, the development would not harm the character and appearance of the area and accord with Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document 2012; Policies CS NPPF, CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document 2012; and the Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2016. Among other things, these policies and guidance documents seek high quality design which is based on an understanding of local characteristics.

Conditions

9. The Council suggested 5 conditions and they have been considered in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. All conditions attached are deemed necessary to make the development acceptable.
10. The standard conditions setting out the time limit for commencing development and the approved plans are necessary to provide certainty. A requirement that the materials in the extension should match those of the host dwelling are necessary to protect the appearance of the host dwelling. Conditions to restrict the placement of windows together with the usage of the roof area are all necessary to protect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, particularly in relation to overlooking.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given, the appeal is allowed, subject to conditions in the attached Schedule.

Liam Page

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, references:
 - (a) Location Plan dated August 2018;
 - (b) Drw No: 1 (Existing Elevations and Existing Floor Plans dated 27/09/2019);
 - (c) Drw No: 2 (Proposed Elevations and Proposed Floor Plans dated 27/09/2019); and
 - (d) Drw No: 3 (Proposed Elevations dated 27/09/2019).
- 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the extension shall match those used in the existing building.
- 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no windows, other than those expressly authorised by this permission, shall be constructed on the first floor side elevations of the extension hereby approved.
- 5) The roof of the 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.

End of Schedule