



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2020

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/20/3258980

4 Hilltop Gardens, Hendon, London NW4 1JE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Anny Yim Fong Pun against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application 20/1776/HSE, dated 10 April 2020 was refused by notice dated 29 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is a first floor side/rear extension with terrace to side elevation. Roof extension including a rear wraparound dormer window with a Juliette balcony to the first floor rear projection.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey detached dwelling located at the end of a row of pairs of semi-detached houses along Hilltop Gardens, which back onto Sunny Hill Park. The houses have 'Tudor style' timber framing on the upper part of their front gables and hipped main roofs. These features contribute to the appeal building and its host row's twentieth century period distinctiveness, to which the sloping lines and form of the mainly hipped roofs make an important contribution.
4. As the street name suggests, the host row sits in a relatively elevated position in relation to Sunny Hill Park, with picturesque, sweeping views down over the park. From what I saw during my site visit, Sunny Hill Park is a public open space that is apparently well-used by families, walkers and joggers. The park's terrain and path network dips down in a northerly direction to a play area, before rising up towards the host row of buildings. A public footpath runs up the park's sloping terrain, approximately parallel to the splayed western side elevation of the appeal building, towards a park entrance. The above factors contribute to the prominence of the rear and western side elevations of the building, as part of middle and short distance vistas across Sunny Hill Park, viewed from the south.

5. Rear dormers are visible on roofs of various dwellings which back onto other parts of the park's perimeter, including two other buildings in the host row. The degree to which other dormers appear proportionate to and harmonious with their host buildings is variable. In any case, a prevailing impression of properties backing onto the park is of roofs mainly free from dormers. Accordingly, the prevalence of hipped roof forms free from bulky dormers is a distinctive characteristic of the area.
6. The dormers at Nos 3 and 5 Westside differ from the appeal building in that they are not an end of row property in an elevated position open to views from an apparently busy public open space. This limits the extent to which they are comparable to the proposal before me.
7. As such, the presence of some other dormers in the area does not constitute a compelling precedent that is analogous to the proposal.
8. The prevalence of hipped roof forms on the appeal building, which is to the eastern side of the park's northern entrance, is echoed by the hip roof form of the two detached dwellings nearest to the western side of the entrance. The roofs' sloping profile and locally characteristic form helps to visually integrate the built edge with the greenspace.
9. The proposed first-floor extension would, to some extent, help visually unify this storey of the building. This element of the proposal would therefore be acceptable.
10. However, the proposed dormer would wrap around the enlarged roof form to a depth of approximately 4m and a width of around 4.5m at the rear, overlooking Sunny Hill Park. This would exceed more than half the approximately 7.5m width of the proposed host roof. Moreover, it would include a stretch of windows across a width of around 3.5m. The extent of this rectangular stretch of glazing would compete with the more traditional first floor fenestration pattern of the proposed rear elevation.
11. Together the above factors would result in the proposed dormer substantially disrupting the building's mainly hipped roofscape and appearing overdominant. This would be visually jarring and fail to achieve a sympathetic interface between the built edge and public greenspace. The above impacts would be noticeable from various viewpoints in the park, including en route to the northern entrance.
12. Given the relatively open nature of the park and elevated location of the proposal, trees within the park would not substantially diminish the detrimental impacts identified.
13. In conclusion, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the London Borough of Barnet's Core Strategy (2012), Policy DM01 of the London Borough of Barnet's Development Management Policies (2012) and Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2016)¹. Together the policies seek to ensure that development complements local character and context.

¹ The London Plan: The Spatial Development Strategy for London, Consolidated with Alterations since 2011, March 2016.

14. The proposal would also fail to accord with guidance on scale and proportion in section 14.33 of the London Borough of Barnet's Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Guidance (2016).

Other Matters

15. The proposed development would provide additional living space within the appeal property. However, the benefit would be limited by the scale of development and would not outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

16. The proposal would be contrary to the development plan and there are no other considerations which outweigh this finding. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

William Cooper

INSPECTOR