
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2020

by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/20/3259000

19 Hillier Close, Barnet EN5 1BD

- 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 and Mrs Hepworth against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/2886/HSE, dated 25 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a loft conversion involving a hip to gable roof alteration, the raising of the ridge height and the insertion of a rear dormer window.
-

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 building is a two storey terraced dwelling set back from and facing the road. It is on the end of a run of six with an asymmetric forward projecting gable feature to the front. Along with the majority of other end terrace buildings in the street it also has an inset side projecting hipped roof section below the gable and main roof height. The land slopes gently to the southeast. The ridge heights of the buildings in the terraces generally follow the reduction in ground level. The proposed development would raise the ridge height of the main section of the building and run it into a side projecting gable end to the terrace. The resulting enlarged roof space would accommodate a rear facing flat roofed dormer window.
4. The increased ridge height of the building, whilst not excessive in itself, would sit above the other ridgelines in the terrace as they fall characteristically with the land level. This would appear contrived and awkward. As would the creation of the new gable end to the terrace. The new gable would also, along with the increased ridge height of the building, result in a bulky and end heavy feature to the terrace, unbalancing the even rhythm of sizes and design features.
5. The dormer window to the rear would fill a substantial section of the roof space and thus be a dominant and unwieldy extension. There are examples of such

additions in the wider area, but these appear historic and dare I say unfortunate in themselves. Generally, the terrace and others around it appear to have intact roofscapes when viewed from the rear and as such the dormer in this case would appear noticeably out of place. The dormer would be to the rear of the dwelling and thus well screened from public view, but this would not sufficiently reduce the harm I have found. It would in any case be highly visible from neighbouring gardens both either side of the appeal building and dwellings fronting Dale Close.

6. The appeal scheme would therefore cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. This would lead to conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Core Strategy¹ and Policy DM01 of the Local Plan², as well as the Council's Residential Design Guidance³. Amongst other things, these policies and guidance seek to ensure the highest standards and quality of design which respects local context and character.

Other Matters

7. The appeal scheme would put to use materials suitable for the host dwelling. In addition, it is unlikely to give rise to harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Be these as they may, one would naturally expect an acceptable material and finish to be used and it usually be subject to a planning condition. The living conditions of neighbouring occupiers is not a contentious matter in the appeal. In any case, there would be a lack of harm in this regard which, by definition, is incapable of weighing against harm.
8. The appellant also points out that, with regard to the location of the appeal building, good access can be gained to public transport and local services and that the provision of the development without additional off street parking is in accordance with policy to allow development without additional parking. I appreciate that the appeal building is in close proximity to local services and regular buses and that there is a general preference for development to take place in these locations for these reasons. That said, I fail to see what bearing this matter has on what is a scheme for the extension of an existing dwelling which does not appear to create a new residential unit nor necessarily require additional or less vehicular parking which, in the case of the appeal building, appears to be on the street.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR

¹ Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document 2012

² Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document 2012

³ Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance 2016