
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2021

by Baljit K Muston BA(Hons) PGDip MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/20/3259199

103A Ballards Lane, Finchley, London N3 1XY

- 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 Luca Fioretti against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/1949/FUL, dated 27 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2020.
 - The development proposed was originally described as side extension on the second floor (uppermost floor) and an extension on existing dormer to make room for a door and new window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The development was described on the application form as set out in the heading above. This was amended by the Council, to "*Roof extension involving hip to gable, raising of rear ridge height, extension of existing rear dormer, including one window and door*". This is also the description used by the appellant on his appeal form. I have therefore used this amended description as the basis for my decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is set within the Finchley Church End Town Centre, which is characterised by terraces of commercial properties, set at the back edge of the pavement, with additional floors above. The architecture of the individual terraces that make up the frontages on both sides of Ballards Lane is distinctive, although with considerable variation in the design, height and roof treatment of the various blocks. The majority of the terraces are of three storeys below the roof, whilst the appeal site has two.
5. The appeal site is part of a building comprising 103 – 107 Ballards Lane. This building is unusual in its immediate vicinity, having a very distinct design, which the Council says is a "*sub Art Deco/Moderne style*". This is particularly evident in the upper floors of the building, when seen from Ballards Lane. The

building is almost symmetrical, with a central section, at first floor level, designed in neo-Georgian style, that projects higher than the first floors at Nos 103 and 107 on the ends of the terrace. The building is then topped with a hipped roof with a shallow pitch, with the slopes of that hip being above Nos 103 and 107.

6. The appeal site is attached to another terrace, comprising Nos 89 – 101 Ballards Lane, immediately to the south-west. This terrace is three storeys in height and No 101 has a gabled roof. However, although physically connected, the two terraces do appear as two distinct entities, with the building containing No 103 being set slightly forward of that containing No 101, at first floor level and above.
7. The appeal proposal would introduce a gabled roof above the appeal property. This would seriously unbalance the building of which the appeal site forms part, and would destroy its current near-symmetrical appearance. This would harm the building's contribution to the street scene.
8. Other large alterations/extensions have taken place immediately behind the building containing Nos 103 – 107. These can clearly be seen in views along Ballards Lane and do detract from the simple roof form of the building containing the appeal site. I have considered whether the visibility of these existing alterations undermines the contribution that the frontage building makes to the street scene, to the extent that the appeal proposal would cause no further material harm. However, these existing alterations do not impact on the near symmetrical appearance of the building within the street scene, which the appeal proposal would. They do not therefore outweigh my conclusions in relation to the main issue.
9. I conclude that the proposed development would have an unacceptably adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) (2012), which requires development to preserve or enhance local character and respect the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings, spaces and streets.

Other matters

10. The appellant points out that paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) says that planning decisions should ensure that developments optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development. This, and the advice in paragraphs 122-123 of the Framework, that development should make efficient use of land, weigh in favour of the development. However, these considerations are outweighed by my conclusion on the main issue, supported by further advice in Paragraph 127 of the Framework that planning decisions should also ensure that developments maintain a strong sense of place.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Baljit K Muston

INSPECTOR