



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 December 2020

by Mark Caine BSc (Hons) MTPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18/02/2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/20/3253406

14 Cumbrian Gardens, Cricklewood, London, NW2 1EF

- 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 Fras Aldurwish against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/1385/HSE, dated 13 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as a 'two storey part single storey part side and rear extension with conversion of roof space'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The name of the applicant is given as Mr Fras Aldurwish in the original planning application form, but the appellant's details are specified as Mr Fras Aldrwish in the submitted appeal form. An email has been submitted to confirm that Mr Fras Aldurwish is the appellant and I have therefore used this name in the banner heading above.
3. The application form describes the development proposed as provided in the final bullet header above. This was subsequently altered by the Council to 'Part single, part two storey side and rear extension including conversion of the existing garage, insertion of window to replace the existing garage door. Roof extension involving hip to gable, rear dormer window and 3no front facing rooflights.' I have determined the appeal on this basis as it more accurately describes the proposal.
4. At the time of my site visit construction had begun but had not been completed. For the avoidance of doubt I confirm that my determination of the appeal is based on the drawings submitted.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

6. The appeal relates to one half of a pair of two-storey semi-detached hipped roof properties that are situated in a predominantly residential area.

- The locality is characterised by similar semi-detached properties, however many of these dwellings have had their roof form altered.
7. The Council has not raised any objections to the principle of the conversion of the garage into a habitable room or the replacement of the garage door with a ground floor bay window. I have no reason to disagree with this.
 8. Nonetheless, the Council's Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2016) (SPD) sets out that all extensions should normally be subordinate to the original house and not appear overly dominant. In order to achieve this for side extensions it advises that, amongst other things, they should not be more than half the width of the original house, and their front walls should be set back from the front building line, with first floor side extensions normally set back 1 metre. It also advises that a distance of 2 metres should be retained from the adjacent property's flank wall, and a minimum gap of 1 metre between the boundary and the extension at first floor level should be maintained.
 9. The two-storey side extension element of the proposal would be over half the width of the existing dwelling and would not be set back from the front face of the original building. It would also not be set away from the side elevation of the adjacent property, at 12 Cumbrian Gardens, by 2 metres. Furthermore, the size and scale of this element of the proposal, in combination with that of the proposed single and two storey rear extension elements, and the proposed rear dormer, and their varying roof forms, would provide significant additional visual bulk and dominance to the original house. As such they would not appear subordinate but would cumulatively challenge the scale and dominance of the original dwelling.
 10. The appellant contends that most of the side extensions to neighbouring dwellings have not been set back, and that most dwellings have gaps of around 1-1.5 metres or less between them. However, he has only referred me to examples at 4 and 12 Cumbrian Gardens in this respect, and I saw larger gaps than those suggested between most of the properties in the street on my site visit. I have also not been provided with the full details of the circumstances that led to the developments at No 4 and 12 being accepted so cannot be certain that they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal.
 11. In any case, the design of the proposed two storey side extension's roof would be such that it would incorporate a partial hip that would be set down from the ridge of the proposed gable type roof to the main dwelling. Although I consider that this would appear as an awkward juxtaposition, the approximate 0.8 metre gap between this element of the proposal and No 12, and the different roof forms of these neighbouring properties would retain the appeal dwelling's appearance as a separate building and thereby ensure that no terracing effect would occur.
 12. Nonetheless, these factors would not overcome the harm that I have identified above as the dominant, oversized and incongruous nature of the proposal would still be readily apparent from a number of neighbouring properties and along the Cumbrian Gardens highway.
 13. I therefore find that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene. As such it

conflicts with Policy DM01 of Barnet's (Local Plan) Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2012), Policies CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document (2012) and advice contained in the SPD. Amongst other things, these seek high quality design and require that all development should respect local context and distinctive local character.

Other matters

14. I recognise that neighbouring residents have not raised any objections to the proposal and note that the appeal property already benefits from planning approvals for a single storey rear extension, roof alterations and a rear dormer extension. However, these factors do not outweigh or overcome the harm that I have identified that the proposal would cause.
15. The appellant asserts that the side extension to No 12 has not been built in accordance with the approved plans and that the Council should take enforcement action. However, this is a matter that would need to be pursued with the Council in the first instance. The appellant also appears to have suggested that he would be willing to reduce the width of the proposal to 2.8 metres. Nonetheless, I must deal with the application as submitted and on the basis of the evidence and the planning merits of the proposal before me.
16. For the reasons given above, the appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Mark Caine

INSPECTOR