

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 March 2021

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 April 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/20/3255042

55 Barclay Road, London N18 1EG

- 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 C Hunt against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application, Ref. 19/04059/FUL, dated 25 November 2019 was refused by notice dated 24 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension to provide a separate dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (i) the effect of the proposed dwelling on the character and appearance of the area, and (ii) the effect on the living conditions in terms of outlook and light for the occupiers of the adjoining property, 39 Weir Hall Road.

Reasons

3. On the first issue, I saw on my visit that the appeal dwelling, No. 55, is at the end of a terrace of four which terminates the linear development on this side of Barclay Road at its junction with Weir Hall Road. The latter has a pair of semi-detached houses, Nos. 37 & 39, splayed at an angle to No. 55 so as to directly face the junction. This arrangement is replicated at the other three corners of the junction and this pattern of development can be seen at a number of other junctions in the estate. The contributes to a locality characterised by repetitions of house design and layouts that give it a pleasingly rhythmic and spacious feel with a distinctive character and appearance.
 4. However, the splayed setting of the four pairs of semi-detached houses at the corners of the junction in Weir Hall Road has provided the space at their flanks to carry out substantial extensions. Two examples of these in the form of very similar two storey set-back side extensions and single storey front additions have taken place at Nos. 37 & 39, with the latter having implications for this appeal. This is because the nearest rear corner of No. 39's two storey extension is in close proximity to the boundary shared with the appeal site.
 5. With this in mind and noting that the two storey side extension to form the proposed dwelling would be constructed on the actual boundary with No. 39,
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the closing of most of the existing gap in effectively a 'pinch point' at the rear south west corner of that dwelling (but because of its splayed siting at a relatively forward point on the boundary of No. 55) would be significantly harmful to the openness of this part of the street scene. The narrowness of this gap at eaves level and compared to the large scale of the two blocks of building to either side (including attached properties) is illustrated in application drawing no. 154/2018. It would run counter to the clear intention of the original layout to maintain space around the buildings at the junction.

6. The slight set-back of the proposed dwelling's first floor seeks to retain a greater distance between the two houses from the flat roof of the ground floor up to eaves level, but any advantages of this would be outweighed by the contrived design and the large mass of brickwork of the two houses close together with their contrasting orientation. This is evident from two of the submitted CGIs, although a CGI of the view from directly opposite the boundary between the extended properties has not been prepared and would have been clearer in illustrating their cramped relationship. Furthermore, the adverse visual impact of the mass of brickwork would be accentuated by the absence of fenestration to break it up, albeit I note the appeal statement's suggestion for an amended plan.
7. I have taken into account of other extensions in the area but it is the particular on-site constraints in this case, mainly the extension to No. 39, that make the difference. I have noted that the appellant has approval for a two storey side extension to enlarge the existing house under reference 19/01359/HOU for a two storey side extension, but this would be offset from the boundary with No. 39 Weir Hall Road by 1.5m.
8. Furthermore, it may well be that in making the decision to grant this permission the Council did not place the same weight that I do on the effect on openness that development in combination with the extension at No. 39 would have on this corner setting in the street scene. This is a matter of planning judgement.
9. On this issue, I conclude that the presence of the two storey extension to No. 39 to all intents and purposes precludes the acceptability of the addition of an extra dwelling attached to the host property.
10. Turning briefly to the second issue, the Council's view is that the side wall of the proposed dwelling would be overbearing and result in a loss of light for the occupiers of No. 39 Weir Hall Drive. However, the combination of the new build to the rear of No. 55 being wholly single storey and the fact that it would be mostly the side garden of No. 39 that would be affected would limit the impact in terms of the restriction of outlook and the increase in shadowing to an acceptable level.

Other Matter

11. The Notice of Refusal also raises the issues of whether the proposal provides adequate information on the sustainability of its design, construction and drainage. However, whilst I consider that for larger scale developments these matters should form an integral part of the application, I am of the view that for the development of a single dwelling of modest size in an established residential area these points could reasonably be covered by the imposition of conditions on a permission.

Conclusions

12. On the first issue, I conclude that the appeal scheme would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area and be in harmful conflict with Policy CP30 of the Enfield Core Strategy 2010; Policies DMD6, DMD8, DMD14 & DMD37 of the Enfield Development Management Document; Policies 7.4 & 7.6 of the London Plan 2016 (as now incorporated in the March 2021 Plan), and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.
13. The harm caused would be significant and would not be outweighed by my more favourable conclusions for the appellant on the second issue and as regards the sustainability aspects, or by any other matters raised.
14. For the reasons explained above the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR