

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 April 2021

**by K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 06 May 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/20/3260529**

**75 Friern Barnet Road, Friern Barnet, London, N11 3EH**

- 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 Umit Guven against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
  - The application Ref 20/3494/FUL, dated 29 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 September 2020.
  - The development proposed is to reduce the front extension canopy and glazing back from the previously built front extension.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed front extension and roller shutters on the character and appearance of the host building, the street scene and the wider area.

## Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a convenience store occupying a substantial building situated in a mainly residential frontage on the busy Friern Barnet Road. It lies opposite a park and adjacent to a small shop unit. There is a vehicular access to buildings at the rear to one side of the site. The dwellings have small frontages mainly behind low walls, railings and hedges. The appeal dwelling and adjacent shop also have land in front of the original building. This has been paved in the case of the small adjacent shop. At the appeal building a single storey flat roofed front extension some 3m in depth has been erected across the majority of the frontage and to the edge of the public footway. It is mainly glazed, has a central entrance door and a prominent overhanging canopy.
  4. This extension has been the subject of a previously refused application that was dismissed on appeal on 3 July 2020 (APP/N5090/W/20/3246906). The current proposal is to reduce the depth of the extension by some 0.5m and also reduce the depth of the overhanging canopy.
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5. The proposed reductions would be limited and a substantial, modern, glazed, box-like structure would remain to the front of the more traditional and attractive host building. Notwithstanding that the structure would be re-painted grey and detailing would be added to the glazing to create a more traditional effect, it would stand out as an incongruous and prominent addition to the building, clearly visible in the street scene in which it would appear alien amongst the residential properties with their set-back building line and small open frontages. The shutters on the front of the extension when closed would add to its presence in the street scene and to its apparent bulk. Overall, the reduction in the scale of the extension and other proposed changes would do little to reduce its prominence or improve its appearance and it would remain as an unsympathetic addition, harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal site and wider area.
6. The appellant draws my attention to other shops in the area which sit directly behind the public footway. However, in these examples the first floor of the buildings are flush with the ground floor and they form a regular frontage with no evidence that they have been extended forwards. This is therefore a common arrangement and different from the projecting ground floor extension seen at the appeal site.
7. Attention is also drawn to a café occupying a corner site in the same block as the appeal site. Here the front and side garden areas have been used to provide an outside seating area. However, this remains open with temporary structures to provide shelter and is not comparable with the appeal proposal.
8. It is concluded on the main issue that the proposed front extension due to its scale, design and prominence would materially detract from the character and appearance of the host building, the street scene and the wider area. In consequence, taken in the context of strategic policies CS1 and CS5 of the Core Strategy, 2012, it would conflict with Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies), 2012 which expects new development to represent high quality design which is based on an understanding of local characteristics such that it preserves or enhances local character and respects the appearance of surrounding buildings, spaces and streets to ensure attractive development. The extension would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of achieving well-designed places.
9. The Council's decision also refers to the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), 2016. However, the proposal is for a retail use and therefore the advice in the SPD does not appear to be relevant in this case.
10. Turning to other matters, the appellant points out that the shop provides a vital service in the local area that has been particularly needed during the Covid-19 pandemic. I do not doubt that this is true or that the extension provides useful additional space. However, I have no evidence that the shop would not remain without the extension and in any case these matters would not alter or outweigh the harmful effect of the extension on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.
11. The buildings to the rear are occupied by a children's day nursery. Concerns have been raised regarding visibility at the entrance to the site for vehicles

emerging onto the public highway. The extension, whilst within the land owned by the appeal site, lies close to the access and its forward projection has materially reduced visibility across the originally open frontage of the appeal building for emerging vehicles. In particular, vehicles would have no view of pedestrians approaching from the left as they emerged from the access, resulting in a potential safety hazard. Notwithstanding the lack of an objection from the Highway Authority, this only adds to my concern that the extension would amount to an overdevelopment of the site.

12. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, including the representations of the occupier of the adjacent shop unit, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*KE Down*

INSPECTOR