



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 29 June 2021

by J Bowyer BSc(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/W/21/3271403

101 Watford Way, London NW4 4RS

- 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 B.Y Developments against the decision of London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/4998/FUL, dated 22 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 29 December 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a ground floor side and rear extension and erection of dormer loft extension. Internal reconfiguration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for 'erection of a ground floor side and rear extension and erection of dormer loft extension. Internal reconfiguration' at 101 Watford Way, London NW4 4RS in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20/4998/FUL dated 22 October 2020 subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan, Existing Block Plan, Existing North Elevation, Existing East Elevation, Existing South Elevation, Existing West Elevation, Existing Ground Floor, Existing First Floor, Existing Roof, Existing Section 1, Existing Section 2, 101WA-A-6.1, 101WA-A-6.2, 101WA-A-6.3, 101WA-A-6.4, 101WA-A-7.1, 101WA-A-8.1 and 101WA-A-8.2.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The roof of the extension hereby permitted shall only be used in connection with the repair and maintenance of the building and shall at no time be converted to or used as a balcony, roof garden or similar amenity or sitting out area.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council's decision notice describes the development as 'single storey side and rear extension. Roof extension involving rear dormer window and 2no front facing rooflights and new side gable window. Internal reconfiguration'. However, neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development from that stated on the planning application

form and entered on the appeal form has been agreed. I have accordingly used the original description which I consider adequately sets out what is proposed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site includes a semi-detached building within a fairly short stretch of buildings fronting Watford Way between its junction with Station Road/The Burroughs and Richmond Gardens. The group includes a mix of detached and semi-detached properties and there are residential, education and veterinary practice uses. External materials are for the most part pebbledash or smooth render with differing colours adding a degree of diversity, and there is further variety at roof level where forms are generally sloping but include both hipped and side-gable pitched designs, and in some cases flat roof dormers. While buildings are of generally traditional appearance, there is as a result little overall consistency in the street scene.
5. The Council has raised no objection to the proposed side and rear extension, internal reconfiguration or to the rooflights or additional side window that would be provided at roof level. From the evidence before me and my visit, I am also satisfied that these elements would be sympathetic to the host building and area. My decision therefore focuses on the rear dormer extension.
6. The dormer would not be set down from the main ridge, and would be set back only slightly from the eaves. It would also extend up to the party wall with 103 Watford Way and would occupy much of the width of the host roofslope. In this regard, it would be contrary to the Council's Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document 2016 (SPD) which includes advice that adequate roof slope is required above and below dormers, that they should be set in at least 1 metre from the party wall, flank wall or chimney stack, and that dormer extensions should normally be subordinate features and should not occupy more than half the width or half the depth of the roof slope.
7. However, there would be a reasonable set in between the dormer and the gable to the side of the host roof, providing some spacing around it and helping to reduce its overall visual impact. The roof of the existing rear projection to the building would also extend above part of the lower section of the dormer, and would serve to break up the impression of its scale and mass. While they would appear to join, the substantial depth of the rear projection beyond the dormer means that I am also satisfied that it would remain a distinct and readable element of the dwelling.
8. In addition, the set in of the dormer from the side of the host building and the close proximity of the neighbouring building at 99 Watford Way mean that opportunities for views of it from the street scene would be very restricted. The height and depth of the rear projections to the host building and attached neighbour at 103 Watford Way would also significantly obstruct views of the dormer from the rear, and in my judgement would be likely to limit perceptions of its overall scale. Furthermore, where it would be seen, the dormer would not be inconsistent with others nearby including to 93 and 99 Watford Way as well as on Richmond Gardens where I observed dormers occupying substantial

proportions of the host roofslopes. Whether or not these have resulted from exercise of permitted development rights, they are sufficiently numerous that the proposal would not therefore be incongruous. I accept that the existing symmetry of the roof with the attached neighbour at No 103 would be lost. Even so, there is a similar relationship between No 99 and its attached neighbour at 97 Watford Way, and given also the lack of uniformity in the street scene overall I do not consider that the relationship would be striking or discordant.

9. Taking these factors into account, I find that the dormer would not be unduly prominent or out of keeping with its surroundings, and while it would be large, I do not find that it would appear excessive or unacceptably dominant so as to detract from the character or appearance of the host building. Accordingly, a departure from the detailed guidance within the SPD is justified in this case.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the host dwelling or area, and I find no conflict with Policies CS1 or CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document 2012 or Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document 2012. Together, these policies broadly seek high quality design that respects local context and distinctiveness and makes a positive contribution to the borough, including through respect for the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings.

Conditions

11. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have specified the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of certainty, and a condition to control the external materials of the development is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. I have also imposed a condition suggested by the Council to prevent use of the roof of the extension as a balcony/roof garden or similar as I agree that this is necessary to safeguard the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers from possible overlooking.

Conclusion

12. I find that the proposal would accord with the development plan when it is read as a whole, and material considerations do not indicate that a decision contrary to the development plan should be reached. For the reasons given above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

J Bowyer

INSPECTOR