
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2021

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/21/3271138

16 Tretawn Gardens, Mill Hill, London NW7 4NR

- 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 L Gainsley against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 20/5677/HSE, dated 25 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of new dormer window to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. At the site visit, construction work was underway at the appeal property with the upper part of the building facing the road covered in scaffolding and plastic sheeting. Although some of the dwelling was therefore obscured from public view, including the main roof, I am satisfied that the details of the appeal scheme as it is shown on the submitted plans and photographs provided and also detailed in the written evidence are sufficiently clear to fully understand the proposal and to determine this appeal.

Main issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 2-storey, detached dwelling with a pitched roof within a predominantly residential area of similar types of dwellings. Along Tretawn Gardens in the vicinity of the site I saw that some properties vary in scale, design and general appearance that was partly due to various external alterations and extensions that have been carried out. Notwithstanding this variety in existing built form, the front roof slopes of properties close to the site were remarkably free of significant built additions with no obvious examples of front dormers in the local street scene to which No 16 belongs. The site is not within a conservation area nor is it a listed building.
5. A new dormer extension would be centrally placed onto the front roof slope of No 16 to replace the roof light. The new addition would be modest in size, simple in design and set well in from all 4 sides of the host roof. It would be a subordinate addition with external materials to match those of the host

building. In these regards, the proposal would be in accordance with the general principles for dormer roof extensions outlined within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document *Residential Design Guidance*.

6. As the new dormer would face the road in an elevated position, it would be a significant and prominent feature of the completed dwelling. As the sole example of a dormer on the front roof slope along this section of Tretawn Gardens, it would draw the eye even among the varied existing built form that characterises the local street scene. Furthermore, the proposal would be flanked by a flat roof dormer on each of the main side roof slopes of No 16. With 3 dormers in place, and each being visible to some extent from the road, they would be conspicuous and repetitive features at roof level. This arrangement would jar with the simple design and largely unfussy roofscapes of properties with which the finished dwelling would be visually 'read'. As a result, the proposal would be a discordant and incongruous feature that would be an unwelcome and uncharacteristic addition to the local area.
7. It is true, as the appellant demonstrates through the photographs provided, that there are some properties further along Tretawn Gardens with side dormers that are visible from the road and with front dormers in the wider area. However, none of the examples cited or those that I saw are sufficiently similar in their relationship to the host building and nearby properties to enable direct parallels to be drawn with the circumstances of the proposal before me. Therefore, these cases do not weigh in support of the appellant's case.
8. On the main issue, I conclude that the proposed development would materially harm the character and appearance of the local area. As such, it conflicts with Policy CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) and Policy DM01 of the Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies). These policies aim to ensure that proposals protect and enhance local character and respect the appearance and pattern of surrounding buildings and streets.
9. The Council and others consider that the proposed dormer, if approved, would set an undesirable precedent. However, I disagree. It does not necessarily follow that the proposal would be a catalyst for other similar proposals to come forward or make it harder for the Council to resist such schemes. Much depends on individual circumstances, and it is important that each case should be determined on its own merits, in the light of the development plan and all other material considerations. Having done so in this instance, I find the proposal to be objectionable for the reasons given.
10. Once in place, the proposal would provide more usable space within the room to be served by the new dormer that in turn would enhance the living conditions of the appellant. However, this benefit does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.
11. Interested parties raise several additional concerns including over development of the site and privacy. These are important matters and I have taken into account all of the evidence before me. However, given my findings in relation to the main issue, these are not matters that have been critical to my decision.
12. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR