



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 September 2021 by A J Sutton BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

by B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/21/3276366

33 Snowdon Drive, Colindale, London, NW9 7RF

- 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 Thira Pornpaditkong against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 21/1179/RCU, dated 3 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 May 2021.
 - The development is described as 'Retrospective Planning Application for dormer window Ref: ENF-0131-21.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Accordingly, the parties have been provided with a further opportunity to make submissions in respect of the publication. The comments received have been taken into account within the appeal decision.
4. My attention has been drawn to an emerging development plan. Barnet's Local Plan is at a pre-submission stage of preparation. Therefore, I have given policies of the emerging plan limited weight in reaching this recommendation.
5. A box dormer was in situ on the rear roof slope of the appeal property at the time I visited the site. It appeared to be the same as the structure shown on the submitted plans. Therefore, I have considered the appeal on the basis that the development has already occurred.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the dormer window on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons for Recommendation

7. The appeal property is an end of terrace, modern and modestly proportioned family dwelling. It has a prominent position, set slightly lower than the adjacent pavement, with the side elevation of the dwelling aligning with a straight stretch of Snowdon Drive. The dwelling is part of an estate characterised by properties of a similar mass and form set in a somewhat irregular pattern of development. Properties in the immediate vicinity of the appeal property generally appeared unaltered at roof level.
8. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document Residential Design Guidance (SPD) supports roof additions providing they are carried out sympathetically. To this end, the SPD outlines a number of considerations, including advising that dormers should normally be subordinate features on the roof and should not occupy more than half the width or half the depth of the roof slope.
9. The dormer is set below the roof ridge and stepped in from the sides. However, it covers the majority of the rear roof plane of the dwelling. In doing so the proportions and scale of the substantial box form overwhelms the rear roof slope and dominates the original modest form of the dwelling. The materials generally match the dwelling but the bulky structure, with a window which fails to align or balance with the fenestration on the original rear elevation, is an unsympathetic addition which has harmfully altered the appearance of the dwelling.
10. The porch roof, which is visible in the street scene, is a modest lean-to structure reflective of the original design of the house. Corresponding features are not in evidence in the disproportionate roof level alteration. The resultant intrusive and highly visible roof development has eroded the consistency in roof forms in the immediate vicinity of the appeal property and has detrimentally disrupted the character of the estate in this respect.
11. I have had regard to the roof alterations at Nos 23 and 30 Pendragon Walk which are close to the appeal property. The addition at No 30 is a smaller structure, although the box dormer at No 23 appeared comparable in size to the development before me. Regardless, the rear of Nos 30 and 23 are set back from the primary street frontage of Snowdon Drive and Ruthin Close respectively. Therefore, these additions are less prominent and disruptive features in the street scene and consequently, they do not provide a justification for harmful development in this case.
12. In conclusion, I find that the development is harmful to the character and appearance of the existing dwellings and the surrounding area. It is therefore contrary to Policy CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Core Strategy), and Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (Local Plan), which collectively, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that development in Barnet respects local context and distinct local character, creating places and buildings of high quality design.
13. It is also inconsistent with guidance set out in the SPD and national design policies of the Framework.
14. The development may comply with minimum amenity standards set out in Policy DM02 of the Local Plan. However, given the importance accorded to high

quality design in local policy, I find that it conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole.

15. My attention has been drawn to the London Plan 2021 and other policies of the Core Strategy and Local Plan. Sustainable Design and Construction SPD has also been referenced in evidence. Specific policies in respect of the London Plan have not been identified, copies of the Local Plan policies and this SPD have not been provided. Therefore, they have not been decisive in this case for this reason.

Other Matters

16. Planning permission¹ was granted previously allowing roof alterations at the appeal property. The permitted scheme differs significantly from that before me in that the previously approved dormer would have been considerably smaller. I accord this matter limited weight in this appeal.
17. Dwellings on Mardale Drive, Kingsbury Road and Goldsmith Avenue with dormer developments are of a different architectural style to the appeal property and the character of the respective areas differs from Snowdon Drive. Therefore, these examples are not comparable with this development and have not been a decisive factor for this reason.
18. With reference to any fallback position created by permitted development rights, these are subject to conditions, limitations and restrictions and no such scheme is before me, so that this matter has not been decisive in this case. However, whilst there is national and local policy support for extensions to properties, such developments are expected to be well designed. I have found this development to be of a poor design, which has harmed the character of the area, and consequently, conflicts with development plan and national design policy.
19. I accept that there would be no harm to the living conditions of those occupying neighbouring properties and that this is a neutral factor. Improved living standards would be of personal benefit to the occupants of the dwelling, but this would not outweigh the harm identified above and the conflict with policy.

Conclusion and Recommendation

20. There are no material considerations that indicate that the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

A J Sutton

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

¹ Decision Notice Ref 16/7857/HSE

Inspector's Decision

21. I have considered all the submitted evidence and agree with the recommendation. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR