



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2022

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/22/3290160

53 and 55 Princes Park Avenue, London NW11 0JR

- 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 Nathaniel Host against the decision of London Borough of Barnet Council.
 - The application Ref 21/2766/FUL, dated 17 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 12 November 2021.
 - The proposed development is for first floor front and side wrap-around extension to No53. First floor front, side and rear extension and new roof design to include hip to gable to No.55.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice. In Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development is the same as that used on the Council's decision notice and accordingly, I have used the one given therein.
3. This application is a linked application submitted and concerning both number 53 and 55 Princes Park Avenue. Due to the similarities between the properties and the specific issues involved I have determined both of these appeals as part of the same decision notice. This appeal decision therefore refers to both applications.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the impact of the proposals upon the character and appearance of the area and upon the living conditions of neighbours.

Reasons

5. Princes Park Avenue is a relatively steeply sloping road aligned along a roughly north south axis. The road consists of mainly semi detached houses that although often of a large scale, are generally typical of suburban areas such as this. Although several distinct housetypes appear present in the street they generally exhibit architectural details inspired by suburban Arts and Crafts type houses such as large bow and bay windows, Mock Tudor timber detailing, render or brick materials and hipped, part hipped or gable roofs etc. Most

properties have large gardens to the rear and a frontage area that was likely once garden, although many of these areas have been paved over for parking. Where gardens remain to the front they contribute in a positive manner to the area.

6. Several properties appear to have been extended in some way but I consider that the palette of materials and architectural features as outlined above remains for the most part, and this defines the overall character and appearance of the area.
7. The appeal properties themselves represent what appears to have originally been a pair of hipped roof houses with a protruding hipped roof to the front covering ground and first floor bow bay windows. These windows are typical of such houses and I consider that they give both the appeal properties a clearly identifiable architectural presence. A later modification from hip to gable has somewhat unbalanced the former symmetry of the pair and ground floor porch and side extensions have allowed the houses to extend to the front.
8. Number 53 Princes Park Avenue has seemingly undergone more extensions than that of its neighbour and the property includes two storey side and rear extensions with a large box dormer overlooking the rear garden. Number 55 also has other extensions, most notable of which is a simple, flat roof extension at the ground floor giving access onto the rear garden through French doors.
9. The appeal proposal before me intends to extend both properties in order to enhance the symmetry of the pair within the streetscene and to improve internal living accommodation. In so doing the proposal would firstly seek to erect a first floor extension above the existing ground floor porch at the front. This would present two symmetrical hipped elements protruding beyond the existing bay windows. Added to this number 55 would see its hipped roof changed to a gable thereby further reflecting its adjoining neighbour. To the rear number 55 would also see a hipped roof first floor rear extension that would, in some ways echo that as exists on number 53.

Impact of the Proposals Upon the Character and Appearance of the Area

10. In assessing this appeal I give great weight to the desire of the Council to maintain design quality and the distinctive character of the Borough's residential areas as outlined in Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Local Core Strategy as well as Policies DM01 and DM02 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan. These aspirations for high quality design are also reflected in The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework).
11. The proposals before me wish to reinstate something of the symmetrical nature of these properties that previously existed. However, the means with which this is proposed would result in two large scale flanking front extensions that would appear incongruous in relation to the parent property and to the wider streetscene.
12. Although the mix of materials would reflect something of the local characteristics, the relatively large proportions, fenestration patterns and design detail would fail to accommodate much of the distinctive qualities that remain evident within the character of the existing houses or the wider area.
13. Moreover, the deliberate mix of gable and hipped roofs would appear incongruous with each other, and the bay windows, perhaps the most

attractive original feature remaining, would appear pushed backward and encroached upon by the much less ornate first floor front extensions. In so doing the two flanking front extensions would dominate the existing houses and erode the original characteristics that define them. As a result the proposals fail in their response to the character and appearance of the area.

14. Although I consider that there would be ways to extend these properties so as to meet the Appellant's needs, I consider the proposal before me would be contrary to the Policies that I have outlined above, namely Policies CS1, CS5 of the Local Core Strategy as well as Policies DM01 and DM02 of the Development Management Policies Development Plan. I also consider that the poor design fails when assessed against the requirements of The Framework for development to be of a high quality design.

Impact of the Proposals Upon the Living Conditions of Neighbours.

15. The proposal to the rear of number 55 would largely echo that of the adjoining property, number 53. In so doing the proposal would see a two storey side and rear extension that would protrude somewhat beyond the rear roof slope of the property and slightly beyond the original rear elevation. I saw on my site visit that the neighbouring property, number 57 Princes Park Avenue, contained two windows to its side elevation as well as a rear window that I have evidence before me serves a rear bedroom.
16. The appeal site is located immediately to the south of number 57. Despite the gap proposed to be retained and the hipped roof of the proposed side and rear extension, I consider that the proposal would appear somewhat over bearing upon the residents of number 57 due to its size, siting and the orientation of the appeal property being directly to the south. I consider also that this over bearing impact would be compounded by the associated reduction in sunlight to these side windows.
17. As such I consider that the proposal would have a harmful impact upon the living conditions of the neighbours of number 57 Princes Park Avenue in this regard and that Policies CS1 and CS5 of the London Borough of Barnet Local Core Strategy would not be met.

Other Matters

18. I was directed on my site visit to view several properties within both Princes Park Avenue and the nearby Leaside Crescent that had, or were currently constructing, extensions of various types. To my mind much of the reason for showing me these extensions was due to them being, in the Appellant's opinion, overly large or of a poor design.
19. Without passing judgement on such matters I did see a variety of extensions of various types, some of which were clearly historic or had potentially had a detrimental impact upon the character and appearance of the area. I do not however have any further information before me as to the precise nature that lead to these extensions being created.
20. As such I can only give this matter very limited weight. Despite this however, I do not consider that using potentially poor design solutions as justification for more poor design would necessarily lead to an improvement of the character and appearance of the area as a whole. In light of this I do not consider that

the presence of these other extensions would outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR