



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: 06 June 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/22/3292473

41 Alexandra Road, London NW4 2RX

- 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 and Mrs Brookes against the decision of London Borough of Barnet Council.
 - The application Ref 21/5888/HSE, dated 4 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 30 December 2021.
 - The proposed development is for part single, part two storey side and rear extensions with rooflights to rear and roof lantern to side elevation. Juliette balcony to first floor rear. Repositioning of front door.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Alexandra Road is characterised by a relatively dense area of terrace or semi detached houses that I consider likely date from around the end of the 19th century to the early part of the 20th century in their construction. Most properties exhibit a similar palette of materials and architectural features including red brick and render, bay or bow windows and chimney stacks with some properties exhibiting relatively ornate architectural details typical of the period.
4. The appeal property stands at the foot of Alexandra Road on the corner of Victoria Road and is part rendered and part red brick. Presumably due to its principal entrance and its two external chimney stacks, the property is slightly set in from Victoria Road that leaves a modest space between the side elevation of the house and the pavement. Bordering this pavement is a low red brick wall and both remaining chimneys are constructed out with the external gable wall.
5. To the front the property has a double height bay window of four bays containing top hung casement windows. To the rear there is a very large flat roof box dormer and a detached garage type building that I saw on my site visit is used as a home office. To the boundary of the rear garden is a high

timber fence stained green. The adjoining property also has a similarly large roof dormer and a single storey outshut extension that forms a high blank wall abutting the rear garden of the appeal property.

6. The proposal before me seeks to improve the internal living spaces of the property through the construction of a part single and part two storey side and rear extension. This would create a larger kitchen dining room with ground floor w/c. To the first floor a bedroom extension would allow the rear first floor bedroom to be larger. As part of these proposals the existing garage building to the rear garden would be removed.
7. I consider that the overall principal of a two storey rear extension could be acceptable here and that it could be designed in such a way as to enhance the host property. I am also satisfied that the set in from the common boundary would be sufficient to protect the living conditions of adjoining neighbours from the Juliette balcony.
8. However, in the case before me I am unconvinced as to the detailed design and integration of the proposed first floor rear extension onto the host property. For instance, the proposed hipped roof to this element would integrate poorly with that of the rear façade of the dormer where although the roof would be set well below that of the dormer, the relationship between the two would be poor.
9. No details have been supplied to satisfy me that this juncture between dormer and extension roof would work appropriately and as such I consider that the design of the proposed extension would appear at odds with the general quality of architectural details to be found locally. As such this element of the proposal would introduce a contrived and largely unsympathetic roof form that would fail to respond well to the overall design characteristics of the area.
10. Moreover, the proposed single storey side extension would present three rather poorly designed windows directly abutting onto the street that would cause harm to the streetscene itself. This element of the proposal would also partially remove the front chimney with the intention of supporting the highest part of the chimney from the building. Once again, I am unconvinced as to how this would work and consider that the removal of so much of the chimney breast with only the chimney stack remaining above the eaves, would represent a poor design response that would appear contrived and would fail to represent the design quality required through the Local Plan.
11. Finally, I consider that the front bay feature is an attractive and important architectural element within the streetscene. Through the total removal of the plinth brick courses and their replacement with framed glazing running floor to ceiling, the proposal would cause harm to the general rhythm and appearance of the streetscene through the loss of important architectural features that are distinctive to the terrace street.
12. As mentioned above, although I consider it possible to extend this property to meet the Appellant's needs I consider that the actual proposal before me would ultimately represent an unsympathetic and poor design response in its attempt to extend this property. As such although I find the principle of such extensions acceptable, I am unconvinced that Policies CS1 and CS5 of the Local Plan: Core Strategy DPD (2012) and DM01 of the Local Plan: Development Management Policies DPD (2012) as well as guidance contained within the Council's Residential Design Guidance SPD of 2016 have been met.

Conclusion

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

A Graham

INSPECTOR