



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2022

by J Somers BSocSci (Planning) MA (HEC) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/22/3295493

74 Mount Pleasant, Barnet EN4 9HH

- 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 V Goyal against the decision of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 21/6285/HSE, dated 29 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as a Two storey front and side extension and part single part two storey rear extension; roof extension incorporating rear dormer and skylights to front and side roof slopes.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the existing building and the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on the corner of Mount Pleasant and Bevan Road. The local area forms a number of streets that contains formally laid out speculative housing which appears to date from the early to mid-twentieth century. The local area contains detached and semi-detached dwellings which have a symmetry in their placement with a consistent building line and setback with front gardens and low boundary walls. There are also visual gaps to the first floor level in between properties over garages where glimpses to the tops of trees in rear gardens are experienced and is a positive characteristic of the area alongside trees to front gardens and raised vegetated planter beds in between the pedestrian footpath and road edge. I disagree with comments in the appellant's Statement of Case (SoC) that the street has a 'diverse mix of houses with varying design and size.' On my site visit I noticed very similar design and size characteristics with brown concrete roof tiles, the use of brick and feature areas of pebbledash and hanging tiles, large forward projecting bay windows, hipped roof forms, and chimney stacks which are a dominant feature to the locality and design of the dwellings, amongst others.
4. The appeal site is one of the characteristic detached dwellings and given its position on a corner plot, has more facades of the dwelling exposed to the public realm. The building comprises of a main two storey component with hipped roof positioned to the centre of the site, with a subservient two storey projection extending towards Bevan Road and a small two storey projection

towards the opposite side boundary, but maintaining the visual gap at first floor level above the single storey attached garage. The appeal site due to its layout is therefore quite prominent in the street and displays a number of positive qualities which are experienced within the street scene, such as containing many of the important design elements described and original roof forms and visual gaps between properties. These positive elements reinforce the local character, appearance and distinctiveness of the area.

5. In undertaking extensions and alterations to existing buildings, the London Borough of Barnet Local Plan Core Strategy (CS) Policies CS1 and CS5 seeks to ensure that redevelopment delivers a high quality design by respecting local context and distinctive local character. The London Borough of Barnet Development Management Policies (DMP) Policy DM01 seeks to encourage development that provides positive characteristics such as understanding context, be high quality in design, form, scale, layout and the spaces around them, amongst others. These policies are supported by the Residential Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (RDG) which offers guidance on specific elements of designing new schemes and alterations, such as local character, pattern of development, building line and setbacks, scale, massing and height, materials, colour and architectural detailing, amongst others.
6. The proposal would essentially enlarge the form of the existing dwelling by 'squaring off' the smaller subservient extensions and incorporating them into one larger building with a new crown roof form with flat apex region to the centre that encapsulates all of the building elements under one roof form. The two storey extensions would be made to the front, side and rear and would also mean that there would be a loss of much of the visual gap at first floor level between the appeal dwelling and No.72, which is a positive characteristic of this particular locality.
7. Whilst a hipped roof form is characteristic in this context, the proposed roof form would be uncharacteristic with its large flat component to the centre of the roof. It would appear that this has been undertaken to lower the overall height of the roof, the result is a large amount of visual bulk and massing which is evident in each of the elevations and when compared to the smaller form and design of surrounding dwellings. I agree with the appellant that detached houses do have more flexibility in their extension when compared, for example, to a semi-detached dwelling. However, the proposed extensions would create a materially larger dwelling and form unlike anything around and could not be seen as being a subservient addition when considering the form as an extension or as in-effect, a completely new dwelling. The proposed extension would create a dwelling and built form that would have an awkward and dominant appearance when experienced within the street scene.
8. I appreciate comments in the appellant's SoC that the building is not in a conservation area or locally listed, however planning policies CS5 and DM1 seek that development reflects the surrounding context and characteristics of the street scene, regardless of any designation. I can also appreciate the appellant's comments regarding permitted development rights existing which would allow a 50 cubic metre extension to the roof. Whilst this may be a realistic prospect of undertaking for the appellant, this fallback position is not comparable to the proposed scheme under this appeal and would not in this instance be a material consideration that could be weighed against the policies of the development plan.

9. In conclusion of this matter, the proposed extensions when combined would result in the loss of positive characteristics such as the visual gap between dwellings and would be clearly disproportionate and the additional visual bulk and massing would be unlike other extensions constructed within the immediate vicinity. Consequently, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building, and the local distinctiveness of the locality on this prominent corner location and be contrary to CS Policies CS1, CS5, and DMP Policy DM01, which is supported by the RDG as described previously.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

J Somers
INSPECTOR