

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 July 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/22/3300159
5 Broadfields Avenue, Southgate, N21 1AB

- 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 Ms and Mr Barrass and Khadivi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 22/00218/HOU, dated 22 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two-storey side extension including hip-to-gable roof extension and rear dormer, demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with single-storey rear extension, alteration to front elevation windows and porch.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application was amended through the submission of revised plans, to which I have had regard and considered in this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of 5 Broadfields Avenue and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling with a hipped roof and recessed single-storey projection to the side and is set within a wider residential locality comprising largely similar style and aged properties. The proposal would include a two-storey side extension with a gabled roof, a dormer extension to the rear, and a single-storey rear extension across the full width of the property.
5. Policies DMD 13 and DMD 14 of the Council's Development Management Document (DMD), adopted in 2014, deal with roof extensions and side extensions respectively. In combination, these require, amongst other things, extensions to the side of a property to normally maintain a minimum distance

of 1m from the boundary with an adjoining property and at roof level to avoid disruption to the character or balance of the property or pair or group of properties of which the dwelling forms a part.

6. According to the appellants' *Planning, Design & Access Statement* (PDAS) the side extension would be set in from the side boundary with No 3 by 0.8m. This would be below the normal minimum separation distance required by Policy DMD 14. Although No 3 is un-extended to the side, the current gap at first floor level between these two neighbouring dwellings is typical of the original rhythm and spacing of properties in the area. Whilst I accept that this degree of spacing has been eroded in places between some neighbouring properties, I share the Council's concern that the proximity of the extension to the boundary in this case would narrow the gap with No 3 to an unacceptable degree that if repeated at the neighbouring property would lead to an uncomfortable relationship, further exaggerated by the additional bulk of the gabled roof.
7. By creating a gabled roof, the proposal would additionally disrupt the character of the original building and would unbalance the semi-detached pair. This would conflict with part 2 of Policy DMD 13. Whilst I note that No 7 has been extended to the side at two-storey, the roof over the extension is hipped, thereby maintaining some balance to the overall building. This would be lost as a consequence of the appeal proposal.
8. Turning to the rear dormer, Policy DMD 13 states that roof extensions must be of an appropriate size and location within the roof plane and that roof dormers must be inset from the eaves, ridge, and edges of the roof, with insets normally between 500-750mm. They must also be in keeping with the character of the property and not dominant when viewed from the surroundings. In this case the dormer would span virtually the full width of the property, including the side extension. As a consequence, it would fail to respect the character of the existing building which is partly defined by its hipped roof and the modest proportions of its rear roof slope. In addition, although no specific measurements are given, it is evident from the plans that it would fail to be adequately inset from all four sides of the roof. The result would be a dominant roof addition that would be clearly viewed from the rear gardens and outlooks from surrounding properties. Its intrusive form would be exaggerated further through the proposed use of white render and the almost floor to ceiling glazing which would show no correlation with the fenestration pattern below at first floor level. For these reasons there would be further conflict with Policy DMD 13.
9. My attention has been drawn to examples along Broadfields Avenue and further afield where similar dwellings have been extended to the side at two-storey, including those with gable ends and large rear dormers. The examples given within the PDAS at Nos 8, 10, 18, 22 and 24 Broadfields Avenue all have hipped roofs over their two-storey side extensions. My overall impression was that those with gabled roofs were by far the minority in the locality and were not so prolific to have changed the overriding cohesive architectural character of Broadfields Avenue and the immediate surroundings. Furthermore, with the exception of 25 Broadfields Avenue, I have no specific details of the planning history to these properties in terms of relevant policies that may have been in place at the time of granting planning permission, or even if planning permission was required. I accept that No 25 appears to have been granted

planning permission for a side gable extension as recent as 2021, but from the images presented within the PDAS, it would appear that the pre-existing situation was a gabled roof and I have no knowledge of the background or circumstances to that particular case. Similarly, I do not know the full details of the examples at Vicars Moor Lane or Hillfield Park, although in any case these are not directly associated with the immediate setting of the appeal property and, regardless, they serve to demonstrate to me the harm that can be caused by insensitive extensions.

10. I appreciate that there are examples of large dormer window extensions in the area but in a similar vein, for most I have no knowledge of the planning background. The examples depicted in the PDAS at 25 Broadfields Avenue and 55 Hillfield Park are not directly comparable with the appeal proposal in all respects.
11. Overall, for the reasons given, I find that due to the width and appearance of the two-storey side extension, and the size and appearance of the rear dormer, the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of 5 Broadfields Avenue and the wider area. I have identified clear conflict with Policies DMD 13 and DMD 14 of the currently adopted DMD. By failing to achieve a high-quality design and appropriate regard to its surroundings, the proposal would also conflict with DMD Policy DMD 37, Core Policy 30 of the Council's Core Strategy 2010, and Policy D4 of The London Plan 2021. For the same reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) objectives for achieving well-designed places.
12. Paragraph 2 of the Framework states that planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The developments nearby and within the wider area that have been put to me do not lend sufficient weight in favour of the proposal to outweigh the harms that I have identified and the conflicts with local and national policy.
13. I note that the Council had no objection to the proposed single-storey extension and other proposed minor modifications to the property. I have no reason to disagree. However, the proposal before me was presented as a comprehensive set of alterations largely dependent upon each other. As such, I have not been able to consider the possibility of issuing a split decision. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR