



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2022

by J M Tweddle BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/22/3293188

32 Laurel Way, Whetstone, London N20 8HZ

- 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 P Ravid against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 21/6585/HSE, dated 16 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension, two storey rear extension and roof conversion with rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is the left-hand half of a pair of two-storey semi-detached houses and enjoys a spacious corner plot location on Laurel Way at its junction with Ventnor Drive. The building is typical of development in the surrounding area, the street scene of which is generally characterised by well-spaced pairs of semis laid out in an orderly manner. These characteristics, coupled with the generally broad width of the highway, combine to give the street scene a strong rhythm and spacious feel, particularly at junctions where development is generally set back from the highway.
4. The appeal property is no exception, while it has historically been extended with a two-storey side addition, it retains a degree of symmetry and balance with its adjoining neighbour. The property is set at a right angle with Ventnor Drive, creating a strong return building line with the properties along Ventnor Drive, and providing a spacious and orderly feel to this part of the street.
5. The proposed development would substantially extend the pair of semis with a two-storey side extension that, along with previous additions, would extend the ground floor of the property well in excess of half its original width. The rearward additions would extend across the entire width of the extended rear elevation, with their massing and scale visually dominating the rear of the property.
6. Even though the proposed extensions would be stepped down from the ridgeline with a slight set back from the front elevation and noting that the garage would be stepped off the side boundary, they would nevertheless be

large, bulky and overly assertive additions to the property. As such, the development would disrupt the marked balance and rhythm described above in terms of the host building and the surrounding orderly pattern of development. Furthermore, the additional bulk and massing of development would breach the return building line along Ventnor Drive, harmfully eroding the spacious qualities of the street and detracting from the character of the surrounding area. Consequently, the development would not be a sympathetic or subservient addition that would respect the original character and appearance of the property.

7. Overall, I find the proposal to be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. Therefore, it is contrary to policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan Development Management Policies 2012 and policy CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan Core Strategy 2012, which together seek to protect and enhance Barnet's character through high quality design. The proposal would also fail to meet the high standards of design set out by the National Planning Policy Framework and therefore it would not be a sustainable form of development. In these regards, the development would also be contrary to the guidance set out in the Barnet Residential Design Guidance (2016), which advises that extensions should normally be subordinate to the original house, respect the original building and not be overly dominant.

Other Matters

8. I acknowledge that other properties along the street have been altered and extended to varying degrees. Indeed, my attention has been drawn to a house across the road from the appeal site that has been extended with a large two-storey side extension. I was able to see this during my visit. However, its design, massing and relationship with the street are not directly comparable to the proposal before me. Therefore, it does not result in the same harmful effects that I have identified in this case.
9. The proposal was not found to be harmful to the living conditions of neighbouring residents. While the appellant states that no objections were received, I have been provided with one letter of objection from a nearby neighbour. Nevertheless, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have found, and so do not lead me away from my conclusion on the main issue.

Conclusion

10. I have found the proposed development to be contrary to the policies of the development plan and no considerations of sufficient weight have been put forward to outweigh this conflict. Therefore, for the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

J M Tweddle

INSPECTOR