



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2023

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/23/3316854
95 Vera Avenue, Southgate, Enfield N21 1RN

- 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 Edward Riley against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 22/03746/HOU, dated 3 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is the construction of two storey rear and side extension, single storey rear extension and loft conversion including rear window dormer and side and rear Velux rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. An interested party states that some of the plans are unclear, inaccurate or inconsistent and that insufficient information has been provided with the application. I have taken these concerns into account in my assessment of the proposal, which is based on all the evidence before me and a thorough inspection of the site and its surroundings. On that basis, I am satisfied that the details of the appeal scheme as shown on the plans and detailed in the written evidence allow a reasonable assessment of the development sought.

Main issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development firstly, on the character and appearance of the host building and the local area; and secondly, on the living conditions of the occupiers of 93 and 97 Vera Avenue with particular regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is one half of a pair of semi-detached dwellings with hipped roofs within a mainly residential area wherein buildings vary in design, scale, and general appearance. Like its attached counterpart, which is 93 Vera Avenue, the main house has a double storey front bay, a side facing cat slide roof and a low eaves level, which are distinctive features of the pair.
5. Along Vera Avenue and other nearby streets, I saw that several buildings had been extended and externally altered including those to which the appellant has referred and provided some photographs and details. Consequently, there

is some variety in the existing built form within the street scene and the local area to which No 95 belongs.

6. The proposal is to enlarge and alter No 95 primarily by introducing a part single storey, part 2-storey side and rear extension with a hipped roof and materials to match those of the host building. It would result in a significantly larger property with extended 2-storey elevations on all 3 sides.
7. At the rear, the proposal would more than double the 2-storey width of the host building. There would also be a long 2-storey flank wall that would wrap around a rear corner of the enlarged dwelling. Taken together, these elements of the appeal scheme would visually dominate the rear and side façades of No 95 and overwhelm the traditional style and proportions of the existing house.
8. At the front, the new side extension would be noticeably set back from the main front wall thereby ensuring that the cat-slide feature to the main roof would remain evident. However, the additional built form at the first-floor level and the extended ridgeline and eaves would fundamentally alter the shape of No 95. In views from the road, the proposal would be a sizeable and prominent feature that would be overly dominant in relation to the original roof form and design of the dwelling. It would also seriously imbalance the pair given that No 93 largely retains its original hipped roof albeit with a large side dormer. The overall effect would be an oversized addition that would detract from the character and qualities of the host building, the pair, and the local street scene even when seen among the varied built form within it.
9. Some reliance is placed on the Council's decision to grant planning permission for side and rear extensions at 92 Vera Avenue, with plans and background details provided. Having seen No 92, I agree that the completed dwelling shares many common features with the appeal scheme. However, the drawings provided indicate that the extensions at No 92 were designed to match that of its attached counterpart, which presumably had already been enlarged in a similar way. If that were the case, one effect on the approved scheme would have been to restore some balance and symmetry to the pair at the front and side, which would not be the case here. In any event, each new development should be assessed on its own merits, as I have done.
10. My attention has also been drawn to a fall-back position in which the appellant could enlarge the house through the exercise of permitted development (PD) rights. However, full details of an alternative PD scheme have not been provided and, from the description provided, it would not include sizeable first floor elements, as proposed. On that basis, few direct parallels can be drawn between a PD compliant scheme and the proposal. As such, I am unable to attach more than limited weight to this consideration in support of the appeal.
11. The Council raises additional concern in relation to the proposed rear dormer and its Juliette style balcony. However, this element of the appeal scheme would be a proportionate addition to the enlarged roof with the top set down from the ridge. Although the top corners of the new dormer would not be set in from the edges of the host roof, this extension would still be appropriate in size, design and location and it would not, in itself, adversely affect the character and appearance of the property or the pair. I saw that several properties close to the site also have large dormers and so this part of the appeal scheme would not be an uncharacteristic addition.

12. Nevertheless, on the first main issue, I conclude that the proposed side and rear extensions would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling and the local area. It therefore conflicts with Policy D4 of The London Plan (LP), Core Policy 30 of the Enfield Local Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 (CS) and Policies DMD 6, DMD 8, DMD 13, DMD 14 and DMD 37 of the Council's Development Management Document (DMD). These policies aim to ensure that new development achieves high quality design and that residential extensions are appropriate in scale and massing, have no adverse visual impact and are in keeping with the character of the property and the local area. As LP Policy D8, which is also cited in the first reason for refusal, deals with the public realm it is less directly relevant to the appeal scheme.

Living conditions

13. Of the nearby properties, it is the occupiers of Nos 93 and 97 situated on either side of the site that are most likely to be affected by the proposal. Since the proposed extension would not project beyond the existing rear elevation of No 93, I share the Council's opinion that the appeal scheme would not harm the outlook from or natural light to the rear of this attached property.
14. The proposed 2-storey flank wall and roof would project beyond the rear build line of No 97. As a result, the upper part of the finished building would be evident from the back garden of this neighbouring house and from some of its rear windows. Even so, the new development would be set back from the shared boundary between Nos 95 and 97 with only part of the proposed extension seen in oblique views from the rear windows of this neighbouring property. The main direction of outlook across the long back garden of No 97 and source of natural light would be largely unaffected.
15. The Council states that the proposal would breach a line drawn at 30-degrees from the first-floor window of No 97. Even if that were the case, having regard to the position, depth and height of the new extension and the relationship between Nos 95 and 97, the proposal would not have an unacceptable effect on the outlook from and the natural light to the room served by this window.
16. On the second main issue, I conclude that the living conditions of the occupiers of Nos 93 and 97 would not be materially reduced by the proposal. Accordingly, there is no conflict with LP Policy D4, CS Core Policy 30 or DMD Policies DMD 8, DMD 11 or DMD 37 insofar as they aim to safeguard residential amenity. My favourable finding on this matter does not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified in relation to the first main issue.

Other matters

17. Once complete, the proposal would provide additional living accommodation for future occupiers, and it would make efficient use of the available space within the site. The new side addition would not result in a terracing effect in the street scene in which the built form of the dwelling visually blends into another due to their close relationship. However, these considerations do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.
18. Interested parties raise additional concerns in relation to privacy, ecology, traffic congestion, potential damage through construction work, noise and general disturbance, overdevelopment of the site and a lack of consultation with nearby residents. These are important considerations and I have had

regard to all the submitted evidence. However, given my findings on the first main issue, these are not matters that have been critical to my decision.

Conclusion

19. There are no material considerations that indicate the proposal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR