



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 May 2023

by A. J. Boughton MA (IPSD) Dip.Arch. Dip.(Conservation) RIBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/23/3318149

45 Brockley Avenue Stanmore HA7 4LT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Y Rana against the decision of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 22/5791/HSE, dated 2 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 27 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is Part single, part two storey extension to front, side and rear following demolition of the existing summerhouse and conservatory. Roof extension with rear and side dormer window with juliet balcony and front and side facing rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal (i) on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and (ii) upon neighbouring users.

Reasons

3. No.45 (No.45) Brockley Avenue lies within a small development of mid-twentieth-century detached housing sitting in good-sized plots in a quiet suburban environment. Although mostly presenting a diluted version of the most expressive architectural features, No.45 is an example of late-nineteenth-century 'arts and crafts' influenced housing typologies which populate many suburban areas.
4. Policy DM.01 of the Barnet Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document 2012 (DM Policies SPD) sets out at (b) that proposals should be based on an understanding of local characteristics.
5. Characterised by steep-pitched plain-tiled hipped roof forms, landscape format fenestration and (where these have not been removed) prominent chimneys, No.45 and its neighbours display a consistency in height, alignment of principal facades and, importantly, materials employed which contribute to the calm suburban environment found in Brockley Avenue. Short wing projections surmounted by a hipped gable are a common feature found in these buildings originally, tending to modulate the overall two-storey mass and reduce a bulky appearance. However, two-storey extensions which result in a crown roof to

address the increased floor area at an upper floor level tend to draw attention to the added building depth through the loss of the principal ridge line in approach views.

6. As the Council indicate, properties have been extended and No.45 displays modest extensions or alterations which have not undermined its largely original form and contribution to the street scene. Ground floor rear extensions, and loft conversions which seek to largely follow the original roof form without the introduction of over-large dormers have, on the whole, little impact on the street scene or the amenity of neighbouring users, subject to suitable care in design and use of materials.
7. Although the proposal incorporates amendments to an earlier application in a less-than-full width 3m deep rear extension at first floor level, the resultant roof form, in combination with the side extension, would present two areas of crown (flat) roof and an incongruous, stepped ridge line visible from some viewpoints. As proposed the resultant roof form would be unacceptably dominant and detract from the appearance of the host building to the detriment of the street scene; noting also the proposed loss of existing chimneys would contribute to this harm.
8. Further prominent features of the proposal at roof level would be the two dormers, one of which is unnecessarily bulky and prominent on the side elevation. Whilst I note the comments of the appellant as to subservience, increasing the height of the roof from what is currently found in order to address this point of concern is a poor design response since the dormer sits over the loft stairway where full headroom is not required as alteration to roof profile to accommodate headroom could be of nominal proportions.
9. Crown roofs are absent in the row of houses in which the appeal site is located¹ and only present in small numbers elsewhere. Although the appellant refers to an approval for the extension of No 31 Brockley Avenue, now erected, to my mind this exemplifies the potential for incremental detraction of the distinctive character of Brockley Avenue that I have described.
10. Turning to the impact on neighbouring users, the slightly reduced width of the side extension compared to a previously refused scheme is acknowledged but nevertheless remains a substantial change from what is currently found, and taken in conjunction with, overall, the much larger (and in part higher) roof form, would be unacceptably overbearing of the adjoining property.
11. The rear facing dormer is also smaller than previously proposed but would nevertheless provide opportunities for wide views over the surrounding area, including parts of neighbouring gardens in a location where, from my observations, there are no such large roof-level dormer windows apparent. Even where direct or intrusive overlooking would not arise, the introduction of roof-level full height opening which by its design is clearly intended to be a viewpoint would lead to a perception of privacy loss contributing to a sense of overdevelopment.
12. Overall, I have concluded that the changes proposed to the roof form would unacceptably alter the character and appearance of the dwelling. I have also concluded that the mass and bulk of the extension together with the perception

¹ 39-47 Blockley Avenue

of overlooking from a prominent window in an additional storey of accommodation would be unacceptably overbearing. These conclusions direct that the proposal would conflict with Policy DM.01(b) of the Barnet DM Policies SPD and with Policy CS5 of the Barnet Core Strategy which seeks high quality design such that development respects local context and distinctive character. In consequence, the proposal would not accord with the development plan taken as a whole such that the appeal cannot succeed.

Andrew Boughton

INSPECTOR