

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2023

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th August 2023

Appeal Reference: APP/N5090/D/23/3322587

8 Banstock Road, Edgware HA8 9JJ

- 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 A. Founda against the decision of Barnet London Borough Council.
 - The application (reference 23/0592/HSE, dated 12 February 2023) was refused by notice dated 28 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension, at 8 Banstock Road, Edgware HA8 9JJ, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference 23/0592/HSE, dated 12 February 2023), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Preliminary point

2. Notwithstanding the extended “description of proposed works” that was given in the relevant section of the planning application form, the nature of the proposal can more clearly be expressed as set out in the Council’s decision notice and in the appeal form, as the construction of a two-storey side extension. That is the description that I have adopted in the banner heading, above.

Main issue

3. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in an established and extensive residential area at Burnt Oak in the London Borough of Barnet, between Edgware, Mill Hill and Colindale. The area has been designated as the Watling Estate Conservation Area. It was laid out, essentially, between the two World Wars and residential development predominates, together with a park, schools and other facilities, including significant retail frontages in Watling Avenue and Deansbrook Road. The housing was developed by the London County Council, reflecting Garden

City and Garden Suburb principles, and, in many ways, the Conservation Area may be said to epitomise 1930s suburban ideals.

5. Within the vicinity of the appeal site, the houses are laid out in terraces (sometimes quite short), with modest back gardens. The houses are set behind small front gardens and the road layout includes some landscaped open spaces. The houses are designed in a traditional "Arts & Crafts" style with thoughtful details that establish a local character. Trees and shrubs soften the townscape. Nevertheless, the roads are rather narrow and the street pattern accommodates parked cars only with some difficulty.
6. Banstock Road is a loop road off Wenlock Road, with a small but significant open space at a bend in the road, opposite the appeal site.
7. The existing house at 8 Banstock Road is at the end of a short terrace. It is rendered externally and the long roof that covers the terrace is hipped at each end. The house stands behind a wide verge or open space that adds to the sense of openness. Since it is located at a sharp bend in the road its side boundary is also on the road frontage, though the side wall of the house is set back from the boundary. The house has a modest garden, with a garage and store adjacent to the rear boundary, but both the front and side boundaries are defined by tall hedges, which obscure the house itself to an extent (although that might easily be changed in the future).
8. It is now proposed to add a side extension to the existing house, at the end of the terrace, providing a "study/playroom" on the ground floor and a new bedroom on the first floor.
9. Provisions in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 impose obligations on those considering whether to grant planning permission for development that would affect a conservation area. In such cases, decision makers are required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas affected by development proposals.
10. Those formal requirements are reinforced by the 'National Planning Policy Framework', especially at Section 16, which emphasises the importance of conserving and enhancing the historic environment, though it also points out the desirability of putting a heritage asset to its "optimum viable use" as does the 'Planning Practice Guidance'.
11. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' also emphasises the aim of "achieving well designed places" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, although it is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities. The achievement of good design includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation.
12. An emphasis on the importance of good design is also to be found in the Development Plan, for example at Policy HC1 of 'The London Plan' that draws attention to the need to protect and enhance heritage assets (which include conservation areas).

13. Similarly, Policy CS5 of 'Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy)', dated September 2012, is focussed on achieving "high quality places", while Policies DM01 and DM06 of 'Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies)', also dated September 2012, provide more specific criteria, aimed at achieving high quality design. Again, attention is drawn to the importance of heritage assets.
14. Attention has also been drawn to the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents, entitled 'Residential Design Guidance' (dated October 2016) which also addresses relevant design criteria and considerations, although it does not have the same force as Policies in the Development Plan. The 'Watling Estate Conservation Area Character Appraisal Statement' (which was adopted in July 2007) is also material to the appeal and is useful and informative.
15. The proposed two-storey extension at the end of the existing terrace would reduce the space between the terrace and this section of the road but a significant space would be retained and the open character of the townscape would be maintained by the wide space at the front of the terrace and the open area opposite, at the bend in Banstock Road. Although the extension would be obvious in views along Banstock Road it would not be unduly bulky or prominent and would not undermine the qualities of the surroundings, in my view.
16. The new extension would be set back from the front elevation of the terrace, thus maintaining its underlying character, and it would be designed to match the architectural character and detailing of the host building (notwithstanding some ambiguity in the drawing style). I am not convinced that the terrace needs to be preserved unchanged and I am persuaded that the scheme would be in harmony with the architecture of the original building and with others in the vicinity. Architecturally, it would not be out of keeping with the host building or the surroundings and it would not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area (which would thus be effectively preserved).
17. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed extension would make a useful addition to the accommodation at 8 Banstock Road. The contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality, even though it would be limited, weighs in favour of the appeal. I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan, in principle, and I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted, subject to conditions.
18. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
19. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of those suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal). I have concluded that standard conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - Unnumbered Ordnance Survey site plan (Land Registry Plan);
 - drawing number PC/2023/001 (Existing Floor Plans);
 - drawing number PC/2023/002 (Existing Site Plan);
 - drawing number PC/2023/003 (Existing Elevations);
 - drawing number PC/2023/004 (Proposed Floor Plans);
 - drawing number PC/2023/005 (Proposed Roof Plan);
 - drawing number PC/2023/006 (Proposed Site Plan);
 - drawing number PC/2023/007 (Proposed Elevations).
3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.