

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2023

by K E Down MA(Oxon) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 December 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/23/3329718

53 Athenaeum Road, Whetstone, Barnet, London, N20 9AL

- 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 Ben Woolman & Ms Toni Schneider against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 23/2196/HSE, dated 18 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is a roof extension, including new rooflights .
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a roof extension, including new rooflights at 53 Athenaeum Road, Whetstone, Barnet, London, N20 9AL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/2196/HSE, dated 18 May 2023, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: ATH-P101 rev1, ATH P102 rev1, ATH-P103 rev 1, ATH-P104 rev1, ATH-P105 rev1, ATH-P106 rev1, ATH-P107 rev1, ATH-P108 rev1 and ATH-P109 rev1 .
 - 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.

Main Issue

2. There is one main issue which is the effect of the proposed roof extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene of Athenaeum Road.

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is a two storey house in an established residential street of mainly larger detached and semi-detached houses, set on spacious plots. Whilst the building line and scale of buildings is fairly consistent, design is not with
-

dwellings of a variety of ages and styles, including two new dwellings close to the appeal dwelling.

4. The appeal dwelling, the design of which appears to be unique in the street, has a main ridge running parallel to the street with a lower, front facing ridge ending in a feature gable above a decorative two storey bay. A second, yet lower, ridge parallel to the street runs from the front projection for about three quarters the width of the main front roof slope. The western side elevation of the dwelling thus comprises a main gable and, in front of and set in from it, a smaller lower gable separated from the main roof by a valley.
5. The proposed alteration would, at the same pitch, increase the height of the lower parallel ridge to match that of the front projecting ridge. A crown roof with two flat rooflights would be formed between this new ridge and the main roof slope. This would facilitate a loft conversion to provide two bedrooms, a study and a shower room. Three further rooflights would be provided on the existing rear (2no) and east facing side (1no) roof slopes. From the front, the appearance of the dwelling would be little changed, with the new ridge set back further from the street and the front feature gable, and lower than the main ridge. This would ensure that, notwithstanding its increased height, it remained subservient to the feature gable and the dwelling as a whole.
6. When seen from the west, the crown roof would be visible but, owing to its set in from the main gable end and set down from the main ridge, it would appear as a discreet and subordinate addition that would not materially alter or detract from the unique character or appearance of the dwelling, notwithstanding the loss of the twin gable. Overall, I find that it would be a sympathetic addition that would respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and sit comfortably in the street scene of Athenaeum Road.
7. It is concluded on the main issue that the proposed roof alteration would have no materially detrimental effect on the character or appearance of the host dwelling or the street scene of Athenaeum Road. In consequence, it would comply with Policy DM01 of Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies), 2012, Policies CS NPPF, CS1 and CS5 of Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy), 2012, and with the Council's Residential Design Guidance SPD, 2016. Taken together these expect the highest standard of urban design that respects local context and distinctive local character such that new development respects that scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings, including the host building.
8. Turning to conditions, the Council suggests two conditions in addition to the statutory commencement condition. I agree that the development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in materials that match the existing building for the avoidance of doubt and to protect the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.
9. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

KE Down
INSPECTOR

