



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2024

by F Harrison BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/T5150/W/23/3328138

7 Randall Avenue, Brent, London NW2 7RL

- 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 Alisson Roberto Teixeira of Psart Investments Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Brent.
 - The application Ref is 23/1875.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing garage and erection of a new detached dwelling with associated access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. During the appeal, a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) came into effect but there are no material changes relevant to the substance of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a grassed area of land that accommodates a garage. It is located within a residential area which is characterised by semi-detached properties, generally with hipped roofs. The site is bordered by the rear and side gardens of properties where there are several single storey outbuildings in an otherwise open area. While there are a number of alterations and extensions to the rear of properties, despite some differences in appearance, the similarity in the general scale of the built form and the open gardens creates a sense of balance which contributes positively to the area.
5. There is an outline planning permission¹ for the demolition of the garage and erection of a detached dwelling at the appeal site, with matters including appearance and scale reserved for future consideration. The principle of a dwelling at the site is therefore not disputed.
6. Nonetheless, the appeal scheme differs from the dwelling approved in outline. The proposal would have a larger footprint and would be taller both to the ridge and eaves height. Consequently, even though the proposed dwelling would be

¹ Ref 22/0175

in a similarly central location within the site, the overall scale and massing would be noticeably greater than the dwelling previously permitted, resulting in a prominent form of development in an area with an open character.

7. The proposal has been designed to take account of the size of nearby properties, however it would be at odds with the existing built form in the area surrounding the site, which are generally low and simple outbuildings in gardens. Therefore, the proposal would not relate positively to the local context and character of the area, as sought by the Brent Design Guide SPD1 (2018) (SPD). Even if the ridge height of the proposed development would be lower than properties in the surrounding area, in the context of its back land location, the proposal would erode the prevailing spacious qualities, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
8. The appeal scheme would have materials to match the appearance of properties on Randall Lane and Dollis Hill Lane and would have similar architectural features which would help to assimilate the proposal into the area. However, the proposed dwelling would have a discordant roof profile. The appellant seeks to draw comparisons with the ridge lines of nearby properties, however these properties are semi-detached pairs.
9. As such, even though the length of the proposed ridge would be similar to a single semi-detached property, on the proposed detached property, without a second semi-detached pair to provide balance, the narrow ridge line would have an awkward presence. The proposed roof design would not complement the existing roof form of the surrounding properties as a consequence.
10. A large volume of residents has concerns regarding the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. Given my findings above, the proposal would stand out as being visually incongruous when viewed from surrounding properties and gardens. Owing to the difference in ground levels between the appeal site and properties to the south on Dollis Hill Lane, the proposal would be particularly visually intrusive in views from these properties, which I observed to be on noticeably lower ground.
11. Overall, the proposal would be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the area, in conflict with Policies DMP1 and BD1 of the Brent Local Plan (2022). Amongst other things, these policies require development to deliver high quality design that complements the locality. It would also be contrary to guidance within the SPD.

Other Matters

12. The proposal would provide for an appropriate standard of accommodation and would protect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers on matters such as privacy, outlook and daylight/sunlight. It would also be sensitively located and designed to avoid adverse impacts on the setting of the nearby conservation area. However, the lack of harm on these matters and the policy compliance with various other development plan policies are a neutral factor, weighing neither for, nor against the proposal.

Conclusion

13. My above findings bring the proposal into conflict with the development plan, read as a whole. There are no material considerations that have been shown to have sufficient weight to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F Harrison

INSPECTOR