
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 January 2025

Appeal Reference: APP/N5090/D/24/3354173

210 Woodhouse Road, North Finchley, Barnet, London N12 0RR

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr. and Mrs Loizou against the decision of Barnet London Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 24/2289/HSE.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as a “first-floor rear extension on top of existing ground-floor rear extension”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a “first-floor rear extension on top of existing ground-floor rear extension”, at 210 Woodhouse Road, North Finchley, Barnet, London N12 0RR, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference 24/2289/HSE), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Preliminary points

2. The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in December 2024 but, in this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions that have been made to it. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action. In this appeal, I have had regard to the most recent version, of course.

Main issues

3. The first 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. The second is the effect of the proposed development on the residential amenities of neighbours (whether unacceptable harm would be caused by overbearing appearance or loss of light).

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in an extensive residential area of north London, where there is a range of housing types and sizes, as well as other buildings, including schools, for example. Woodhouse Road is a busy through route (the A1003), running approximately east-west. In the vicinity of the appeal site, houses on the southern frontage of Woodhouse Road are typically laid out in short terraces, set

back from the highway. The road has a spacious character with broad grass verges, varying in width, set with large mature trees.

5. Number 210 Woodhouse Road is at the end of a short terrace of houses, close to the junction of the main road with Short Way, which is a minor side road. The terrace at number 210-216 Woodhouse Road is constructed of brickwork (painted at number 210) with rather elaborate hipped, tiled roofs, in a traditional style. The houses have modest front gardens behind the grass verge but other houses to the west are located behind an even wider verge, with the result that number 208 is set behind number 210. Both have good-sized back gardens, however, and the rear of the terrace can be seen from Short Way.
6. At the rear of the house at number 210, a single-storey extension to the living room has been added in the past. This extension is inset from the side boundary with number 212. It is now proposed to add a first-floor rear extension above the existing ground-floor rear extension, though the new first floor would be further inset from the side boundary with number 212.
7. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' 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 in new development.
8. Policies in the Development Plan also share these basic principles and attention is drawn to Policies in 'The London Plan' (dated March 2021) and in 'Barnet's Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document' (dated September 2012) and 'Barnet's Local Plan (Development Management Policies) Development Plan Document' (also dated September 2012).
9. 'The London Plan' is the "spatial development strategy for Greater London" and it includes Policies that are intended to encourage high standards of urban design. Policy D3 promotes good design in broad terms while aiming to make the "best use" of urban land.
10. Policy CS1 in the 'Core Strategy' sets out the way in which the Council's "place shaping strategy" is intended to concentrate and consolidate housing and economic growth in sustainable locations. Policy CS5 is aimed at promoting good standards of design that respects local context and distinctive local character, to "enhance the borough's high-quality suburbs", among other things. Policy DM01 in the 'Development Management Policies' likewise seeks to achieve high quality design that protects residential amenities.
11. The Council's 'Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance' (dated October 2016) is also relevant but it does not have the force of the statutory Development Plan.
12. The rear part of the proposed extension would be visible from surrounding properties, as well as in views from Short Way, across the rear gardens of neighbours. The flank wall of the rear extension would be set alongside the neighbouring flank wall at number 208, however. The long side wall of the property

would have only a very limited visual impact on the surroundings, therefore, and the enlarged side elevation would not be unduly intrusive. The rear elevation would be somewhat ungainly, incorporating a small area of flat roof at the apex of the pitched roof, and introducing an asymmetrical feature to offset the first floor from the ground floor. Nevertheless, the scheme has been designed to be in harmony with the existing building and the materials and forms to be used would be compatible with the architecture of the existing house.

13. Hence, I have concluded that the proposed extension would be acceptable in terms of its architectural design, and that it would appropriately respect the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.
14. The first-floor extension would have some effect on the outlook from the rear of number 212 Woodhouse Road, as it would project beyond the main rear wall of the properties. The projection would be greater than the three metres criterion that is indicated in the Council's 'Residential Design Guidance' but, on the other hand, the first-floor element would be further inset from the side boundary than the existing ground-floor extension. In this case, I am convinced that the extension would not be too dominant or intrusive in its context.
15. Moreover, the rear elevation of the terrace is south-facing, and although there would be some additional shading at the rear of number 212, the effect would be limited.
16. Taking account of the scale and position of the proposed first-floor rear extension, I am not persuaded that its effect on the outlook or light available to its neighbour at number 212 would be unacceptable in an urban context.
17. As to the effect of the proposed development on number 208, it is noted that the new extension would hardly project beyond the main rear wall of that house. The houses are separated by a shared pathway and the new extension would not have an appreciable adverse effect on light or outlook at the rear of number 208.
18. Although the new extension would have an impact on side windows of number 208, the particular circumstances of the original design need to be taken into account. The ground-floor side window at number 208 is already compromised by the existing ground floor extension at number 210, while number 208 also has the benefit of a rear facing ground floor window.
19. The first-floor side window apparently serves a bedroom, and I accept that it can be considered to be "unneighbourly" in some respects (especially in considering the outlook issue), as it overlooks the neighbouring plot. This seems to have been a feature of the original design, since there appears to be a similar layout at number 210, with a bedroom served by a window in the side elevation. In any case, the first-floor window would be less affected than the ground floor window and it would continue to receive an adequate amount of light.
20. Thus, the proposed extension would have some impact on both light and outlook in relation to side windows at number 208. On balance, nevertheless, I have concluded that the effect on number 208 would be acceptable in all the circumstances and that the scheme would meet the design standards which are aimed at in the Development Plan.

21. I have also considered whether the large new window serving the proposed “master bedroom” would give rise to undue overlooking. I have, however, noted that there would be no projecting balcony and that rear windows in the terraces inevitably overlook nearby properties to some degree. The new window would not create an unacceptable intrusion on neighbours’ privacy, therefore.
22. In short, I have concluded that the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties would not be unduly harmed by the proposed development.
23. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is “sustainable” in planning terms, and the proposed extension would be a useful addition to the accommodation at number 210 Woodhouse Road. The contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality, even though it would be very limited, weighs in favour of the appeal. I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan, in principle.
24. Hence, I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted and, 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.
25. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal). In particular, I have concluded that 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 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 drawings:
 - drawing number 98-001 rev P01 (Site Location Plan);
 - drawing number 98-002 rev P01 (Block Plan);
 - drawing number 98-200 rev P01 (Existing First Floor Plan);
 - drawing number 98-201 rev P01 (Existing Second Floor Plan);
 - drawing number 98-202 rev P01 (Existing Roof Plan);
 - drawing number 98-210 rev P01 (Existing Front Elevation);
 - drawing number 98-211 rev P01 (Existing Side Elevation);
 - drawing number 98-213 rev P01 (Existing Rear Elevation);
 - drawing number 00-200 rev P01 (Proposed Ground Floor Plan);
 - drawing number 00-201 rev P02 (Proposed First Floor Plan);
 - drawing number 00-202 rev P02 (Proposed Roof Plan);
 - drawing number 00-210 rev P01 (Proposed Front Elevation);
 - drawing number 00-211 rev P01 (Proposed Side Elevation);
 - drawing number 00-212 rev P02 (Proposed Rear Elevation);
 - drawing number 00-213 rev P02 (Proposed Side Elevation).
- 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.