
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 December 2016

by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 3 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/16/3160680
44 Purbrock Avenue, Watford WD25 0AD

- 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 Mrs Ewing against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00818/FULH, dated 14 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is to erect an orangery to the rear of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an orangery to the rear of the property at 44 Purbrock Avenue, Watford WD25 0AD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/00818/FULH, dated 14 June 2016, 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: 1:1250 OS Plan, 1:500 Block Plan, Existing Plan and Elevations page 3 of 8, Proposed Plan page 4 of 8, Proposed Elevations page 5 of 8, Proposed Elevations page 6 of 8, Proposed Elevations page 7 of 8 and Typical Section.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the orangery hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and of the area.

Reasons

3. The existing dwelling is a semi-detached property in a cul-de-sac of similar properties. The house, at No 42, which forms the other half of the building, has a flat roofed single storey rear extension and a lean-to side garage which extends back as far as the rear extension. There is also a flat roofed single storey rear extension at the other adjacent property at No 46. Additionally at No 46 there is a timber pergola with canopy roof which projects out from the rear extension.
 4. The proposed orangery would stretch across the whole width of the plot, and in this respect it would match the extensions at No 42. It would have a relatively
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low roof, being around 3.2 metres in height. There is a small flat roofed single storey rear projection at the site which results in a staggered rear elevation. Consequently, although the proposal would extend from the existing dwelling by approximately 5.5 metres at most, the majority of the extension would be around 3.7 metres deep.

5. Paragraph 8.5.1b of the Council's Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) advises that rear extensions should not exceed 3.5 metres in depth from the original house so as to ensure they do not impact on neighbouring dwellings and are subordinate to the existing house. The Council do not consider the extension would impact unacceptably on the occupiers of neighbouring properties and I have no reason to come to a different view.
6. With regard to its relationship with the existing property, the development would exceed the distance given in the SPD. Nonetheless, I consider it would appear subservient to the main house. This is mainly due to the low height of the extension and the relatively large size of the host dwelling, resulting from its two storey side extension¹. It is also partly because the orangery would be comparable in terms of its height, depth and width to the extensions at the neighbouring properties. As such, when seen in this context, it would appear sympathetic to the pattern of development in the immediate area which assists in making the extension appear proportionate to the host dwelling.
7. Additionally, though the orangery would have a glass roof, the fenestration and materials would generally match those of the main house hence reflecting the design of the existing house.
8. Consequently the orangery would respect the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and so would not harm the character and appearance of the area. Therefore the extension would comply with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy which requires development to respect local character. Although the proposal would not comply with the specific distances in paragraph 8.5.1b of the SPD, it would accord with the general advice in paragraph 8.2.1 of the SPD which requires extensions to respect the character and scale of the host building.

Conditions

9. In accordance with the requirements of the Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework I have imposed the standard condition relating to the commencement of development. I have also attached a condition specifying the relevant plans in order to provide certainty, and a condition relating to construction materials in the interests of maintaining the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR

¹ Planning permission Ref 88/00736/FUL