

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2017

by Martin H Seddon BSc DipTP MPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/17/3173451

18 Sutton Road, Watford, WD17 2QF

- 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 Ms D Moses against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 16/01734/FULH was refused by notice dated 10 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is: a single storey rear extension and alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear extension and alterations at 18 Sutton Road, Watford, WD17 2QF in accordance with the terms of the application ref 16/01734/FULH, dated 12 December 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 216136/01, as existing and 216136/02, proposed extension and alterations.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of neighbours at No.20 Sutton Road in respect of outlook.

Reasons

3. No.18 Sutton Road is a two-storey end terrace dwelling. Its setting is dominated by a large multi-storey car park. The dwelling is located at the edge of the Estcourt Conservation Area. The Council's Historic Buildings Officer has raised no objection to the proposal, including the replacement bay window. I see no reason to disagree because the rear extension would not be seen from public viewpoints and would use external materials to match those in the existing building. I consider that there would be no harm from the proposal to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
4. The proposed extension would infill the space between a two-storey outrigger and a brick wall and trellis that forms the boundary with No.20 Sutton Road. No.20 has a rear ground floor window serving a habitable room, a side window

in its outrigger and a rear extension. The Council accepts that there would be no significant increased loss of light to the rear facing window in No.20 because of the existence of overshadowing from the rear outrigger of the appeal building. However, currently there is also overshadowing from the boundary wall which is located near the rear window of No.20. This is because of the height of the boundary wall at around 1.65 m, topped by a trellis of approximately 0.35 m. The outlook from the rear window is already restricted by the wall and trellis.

5. The proposed extension would cause a tunnelling effect for the rear area of No.20, contrary to advice in the Council's *Residential Design Guide*. The appellant has referred to an infill extension allowed at No.26 Sutton Road, although the site circumstances were such that no tunnelling effect resulted.
6. Despite conflict with the design advice, as mentioned above, the impact of the proposed extension on the outlook from the rear facing window at No.20 would be insignificant because of the height and screening effect of the existing boundary wall and trellis. In addition, the tunnelling/enclosure effect would be reduced because the extension would have a flat roof with a roof light. The upper part of the extension facing No.20 and seen above the boundary wall and trellis would also be glazed, rather than a solid wall.
7. There are also several other rear extensions at properties along Sutton Road and the proposed extension would not be uncharacteristic, whilst providing additional living space for a small property. I find that the proposal would not result in a significant increased loss of outlook from the ground floor rear window in No.20. There would be no conflict with policy UD1 of the Watford Borough Local Plan Part 1 regarding the delivery of good design.
8. I have taken all other matters raised into account. For the reasons given above the appeal is allowed, subject to conditions.

Martin H Seddon

INSPECTOR