

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 October 2017

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 1 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/17/3180035

26 Westwick Place, Watford, WD25 0FD

- 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 Anil Sakaria against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00516/FULH, dated 20 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is a front extension – including porch. Side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey detached dwelling. It is located in a residential area and comprises one of a row of four detached dwellings in a cul-de-sac to the south western side of Westwick Place.
 4. The appeal property, like other houses in the street, is set back from the road. It has a parking area and garden to the front, and a garden to the rear.
 5. During my site visit I observed the appearance of the four detached dwellings in the cul-de-sac to be very similar and found that this, together with the regular stepping back of each property as one travels along Westwick Place to the end of the cul-de-sac, provides for a strong building line, a distinct regularity and sense of uniformity. These features make a positive contribution to local character.
 6. The proposed development would project forward of the main front elevation of the appeal property. Section 8.9.1 of the Council's Residential Design Guide (2014) generally resists building forward of the front elevation of an existing building, particularly where there is a strong building line in the street. In this circumstance, as noted above, there is a strong building line and this comprises a positive local feature.
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7. I find that, by projecting forward, the proposal would serve to disrupt the sense of uniformity identified. The harmful impact of this would be exacerbated by the proposed mono-pitch roof along the front of the property, which would, I find, appear discordant and comprise an intrusive feature that would draw attention away from the existing two storey gable feature shared with other dwellings along the street.
8. Taking the above into account, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the Framework, Core Strategy¹ Policies UD1 and SS1, and to the Council's Residential Design Guide (2014) which, together amongst other things, protect local character.

Other Matters

9. I note that the proposal would provide additional living space, but this is not a matter that outweighs the harm identified above. Further, whilst the appellant points out that there have not been any objections to the proposal, this could be for any number of reasons and is not a factor that, in itself, lends support to the proposal, or outweighs the harm identified.
10. The appellant refers to approval for another development at another property, elsewhere (12 Westwick Place). However, there is no substantive evidence before me to demonstrate that this other scheme and the circumstances relating to it, are so similar to the proposal before me as to provide for a direct comparison.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR

¹ Watford's Local Plan. Part 1 – Core Strategy 2006-31. Adopted 2013.