



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 July 2019

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/19/3229798 34 Woodland Drive, Watford WD17 3BX

- 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 D Knightley against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00127/FULH, dated 24 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two storey side and rear extension with carport and alterations to windows on all elevations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a two storey side and rear extension with carport and alterations to windows on all elevations, at 34 Woodland Drive, Watford WD17 3BX, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/00127/FULH, dated 24 December 2018, 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: 1814/03 Revision C, 1814/03 Revision D and 1520/02 Revision C.
 - 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.
 - 4) Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted, the windows in the side elevations of the dwelling at first floor level shall be installed with obscured glass and with any opening being at a minimum height of 1.7m above internal floor level. The windows shall thereafter be retained in accordance with these details.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, locality and the streetscene.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a two storey detached dwelling where the proposed development includes a car port. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Residential Design Guide, adopted 2014, amended 2016, advises that with regard to front extensions, developing forward of the front

- elevation of an existing building will not generally be acceptable. An extension should also normally be subordinate to the existing property, while respecting its roof form and pitch.
4. The existing dwelling has a single storey projection at the northern end of the front elevation. The proposed car port would not project beyond this and be no closer to the street. It would not therefore extend forward of the front elevation, with no detrimental impact occurring in relation to the building line in the vicinity. It would also have a roof with parts that slope down to the outside and front, respecting the form and pitch of the hipped main roof and hipped roof of the two storey front projection.
 5. The width of the car port would only be approximately half that of the two storey projection, with its top at about the cill level of first floor windows. Moreover, the degree to which it extends beyond the two storey feature towards the road would be fairly modest. As a car port it would have an open front and side, significantly limiting its perceived bulk.
 6. In these circumstances, rather than being prominent and visually dominant, the car port would be subordinate to the existing property. Even when considering the existing ground floor projection and carport together, the appreciably greater scale of the two storey projection, due to its height and width, would ensure that it remains the dominant feature of the front elevation.
 7. The roof of the car port would reflect that of the single storey projection at the other end, giving the house a fairly cohesive and balanced appearance. It would be compatible with the varied design found in the vicinity, including dwellings with ground floor parts extending towards the street such as the neighbouring properties at 30 and 32 Woodland Drive.
 8. For these reasons, it is concluded that there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, locality and streetscene. The development would respect and enhance local character in accordance with Watford's Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted 2013, Policy UD 1, while also complying with the SPD.
 9. Concerns over the future use of the property would not be a sound basis for rejecting the appeal. Seeking to control the design and colour of the new windows would represent an unduly detailed level of control in relation to a property that is neither a Listed Building nor located within a Conservation Area. Taking account of all other matters raised, given the absence of any harm it is determined that the appeal succeeds.
 10. A condition specifying the approved plans is necessary to provide certainty. The facing materials used should match those of the existing dwelling to protect its appearance. The side facing windows at first floor level in the extended dwelling should have obscured glazing and restricted opening in order to prevent undue overlooking of the neighbouring properties.

M Evans

INSPECTOR