



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2019

by Richard Aston BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: Friday, 30 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/19/3233409
81 Woodland Drive, Watford WD17 3LA

- 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 T Navaneethan against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00308/FULH, dated 18 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is removal of rear garage and side utility building and construct new front porch, single storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for removal of rear garage and side utility building and construct new front porch, single storey side and rear extension at 81 Woodland Drive, Watford WD17 3LA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/00308/FULH, dated 18 March 2019, 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: P-01, P-02 Rev A, P-03 Rev A, P-04 Rev A and 1:1250 Site Location Plan.
 - 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.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of No. 83 Woodland Drive, with particular regard to outlook and the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and area.

Reasons

Living conditions

3. The host property is a semi-detached, 2 storey dwelling in a street of similar properties of a traditional suburban character and appearance. It is separated from No. 83 by the side passage of that property and a single storey extension to the side of the host property. That extension projects for a considerable

depth along the shared boundary and is constructed with a part mono pitched, part pitched and flat roof. The proposal would replace the existing additions with a single storey extension over the same footprint but larger and taller over its entire length given the proposed shallow pitched roof form.

4. The extension would be evident from the rear upper storeys of No. 83, some of its side windows and part of its garden. However, it would also be partly shielded by an existing outbuilding in the rear garden of No. 83 which is located on the boundary and I also observed some mature soft landscaping within that garden and a single storey rear extension. The side extension would be a noticeably taller replacement of built form but not excessively so and its shallow roof would still slope away from that property. Subject to materials to match the existing house, it would not be visually dominant to the extent that the eye would be unacceptably drawn to it from the habitable living accommodation of No. 83 and its private garden.
5. For these reasons, the proposal would not be oppressive or overbearing to the outlook from No. 83 Woodland Drive and would not cause harm to the living conditions of its occupiers in terms of outlook. There would be no conflict with Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy ('CS') or the Council's Residential Design Guide 2016 ('RDG') insofar as they require a high quality of design and that an extension must not adversely affect the level of amenity enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Character and appearance

6. Although the property has undergone some substantial alterations, those before me would be limited to the side and rear elevations at ground floor level along with a front porch which the Council does not object to. The appellant does not dispute that the single storey rear extension would exceed the guidance in the RDG but this would not be substantially so and any increase would not be material given its location and scale.
7. The changes to the side of the host property would replace the existing variety of roof forms on the side extension with a more uniform appearance. Although taller it would not be overly prominent and would be within a streetscene that contains a variety of similar additions and extensions to the side. Overall, subject to matching materials the proposal would not be out of keeping with the host property to any unacceptable degree and would not be incongruous or visually harmful. In such a context it would be an appropriate quality of design.
8. For these reasons, the proposal would not cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property or the area. Consequently, there would be no conflict with Policy UD1 of the CS or the RDG insofar as they require a high quality design that adheres to design principles, including that new development should respect and enhance local character and that of the host building.

Conditions

9. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council and have amended the wording where necessary in the interests of clarity and simplicity. A condition is required to ensure compliance with the approved plans as this provides clarity. A condition requiring details of the external materials to match

existing is also necessary, in order to protect the character and appearance of the host property and area.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the proposal would accord with the development plan, when read as a whole. Material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.
11. Having considered all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Richard Aston

INSPECTOR