



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020 by S Watson BA(Hons) MSc

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/19/3240796

47 Cassiobury Park Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 7LD

- 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 Via Properties against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00943/FULH, dated 15 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is to remove existing outbuilding and construct new two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was carried out by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locally listed host dwelling and area.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The appeal site is on the north side of Cassiobury Park Avenue, a predominantly residential street. It contains a detached three-storey dwelling, with the second floor within the roof space. The dwelling is in the Arts and Crafts style which is characteristic of the east end of the street and has been identified by the Council as a locally listed building.
5. The glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) states that heritage assets include assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Paragraph 192 of the Framework establishes that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of a number of matters, including the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It goes on to state that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, such as the host dwelling, that a balanced judgement will be required having

- regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
6. In terms of the significance of the host dwelling, the *Locally Listed Buildings in Watford* document notes that "*the single gable plan and end gable to the road is noteworthy and unusual. The horizontal tile banding and pattern of casement windows are particularly prominent.*" Although it appears that replacement windows have been inserted into parts of the dwelling, the significance of the heritage asset as a whole has not been adversely affected.
 7. The new extension would be smaller than those previously refused planning permission by the Council which was dismissed on appeal¹. It would also be of a different roof design. Although set back from the front elevation with a lower ridge height, it would comprise an overly large addition on the side of the host property, the scale of which would compete visually with the existing dwelling. Moreover, the proposed roof over the extension, given its size and shallow pitch, would not be sympathetic to the smaller, steeply pitched roof of the host dwelling. In light of my findings I conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and harm to the significance of this non-designated heritage asset would result.
 8. The existing property makes a positive contribution to the streetscene, being a good example of an Arts and Craft dwelling. The harm that would be caused by the extension would significantly diminish the contribution the property makes to the streetscene and harm to the character and appearance of the area would occur as a result.
 9. Although other features of the extension, such as the fenestration layout and external materials would respect the host dwelling and take cues from its design, I consider that they would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm identified above. Furthermore, only very limited detail has been provided for the design of the proposed replacement fenestration. I cannot therefore consider whether the design would be more or less appropriate than the existing. As such this matter does not outweigh the harm identified above. Likewise, I am not convinced that the proposal would be necessary for the host dwelling to be renovated as asserted by the appellant.
 10. I noted during my site visit, examples of side extensions close to the appeal site. However, I am not aware of the circumstances under which these were approved and moreover the siting and appearance of the host dwellings are different to that on the appeal site. As they are not directly comparable to the proposal before me, they are not good reason to allow harmful development in this case.
 11. In light of the above, I conclude that the proposed development would result in harm to the legibility of the original form of this non-designated heritage asset which is not outweighed by other considerations, including the letter of support received. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies UD1, UD2 and SS1 of *Watford's Local Plan: Part 1 - Core Strategy*, saved Policy U15 of the *Watford District Plan* which collectively seek, amongst other things, for high quality design and the conservation of the borough's historic environment. There would also be conflict with sections 8.2, 8.3 and 8.8 of the *Residential Design Guide*, which requires extensions to be in harmony with the host building and

¹ Ref APP/Y1945/D/19/3222665

to respect the streetscene. The Council has referred to section 8.7 of this document in its refusal reason. As this section relates to single-storey side extensions, it is not relevant to the proposal before me.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Watson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR