



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 July 2020

by I A Dyer BSc (Eng) MIHT

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/20/3249638 15, Kenford Close, Watford WD25 7JF

- 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 Lucas Kwiatkowski against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01391/FULH, dated 2 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 31 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a first floor side extension over existing garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of a first floor side extension over existing garage at 15, Kenford Close, Watford WD25 7JF 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: 15KEN/03 and 15KEN/02A.
 - 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.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant has provided an extensive description of the development. The Council amended this to "Erection of a first floor side extension over existing garage". I have therefore used the amended description provided by the Council as this provides a clearer description of the proposed development and I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The appellant has confirmed that the spelling of his name was incorrect on the application form, I have used the correct spelling of his name as confirmed in my banner heading and I have determined this appeal on that basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is one of a pair of semi-detached houses lying on Kenford Close. Kenford Close is a short cul-de-sac fronted by residential development, predominantly in the form of two storey semi-detached houses, set back from the road behind modest front gardens.
6. Many of the properties have side garages and some have side extensions above these. However, the dwellings are separated by gaps at second storey level and this provides visual breaks in the frontage, retaining the visual separation of the semi-detached pairs. The pairs of semi-detached dwellings with their intervening spaces between them create a visual rhythm around the street.
7. The site is located close to the turning head for Kenford Close and the properties in this part of Kenford Close form a partial ring facing in towards the turning head. This arrangement results in many of the side boundaries of the properties being at an angle to the side walls of the dwellings, rather than being parallel.
8. During my site visit I observed that the outer walls of most garages serving the properties were aligned along the property boundaries, rather than being aligned to the dwelling walls. The appeal site has such a garage, with its outer wall running along the boundary with 14 Kenford Close.
9. The proposed extension would be above the existing garage, set back by 1.0m from the front of the dwelling. The front part of the extension would have a wall running parallel to the side wall of the dwelling before angling back parallel to the boundary with No. 14, set in by 1.0m from the boundary line. The extension would have a gable roof with a ridge line set below that of the main dwelling and use materials matching those used on the dwelling.
10. Section 8 of the Watford Borough Council adopted guidance 'Residential Design Guide' (2014, as amended 2016) (the RDG) gives advice on the design of side extensions to achieve development in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan.
11. The scale of the extension, setback, offset from the boundary and lower ridge would provide a suitable degree of subservience to the main building, whilst the use of materials to match that of the main building would provide a sense of cohesion. However, a short section of wall, to the rear of the extension would not be parallel to the side wall of the existing flank wall and, in this respect, the proposal would not accord with the guidance contained within the RDG.
12. During my site visit I noted the presence of several other side walls of extensions and garages that did not run parallel to the side wall of the dwelling associated with them, but were more closely aligned to the orientation of the boundary. Further, because of the position of the site at the inner end of the cul-de-sac and the angles presented to the public realm by the properties, there would be limited views of this wall from the public realm.
13. Whilst there is tension between the proposal and the RDG in respect of the orientation of the rear part of the side wall of the extension, given the existing built form within Kenford Close, the orientation of the wall would not be so out of place as to result in harm.

14. Whilst the development would not entirely accord with the advice provided within the RDG, I have found that the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the site and the surrounding area. The proposal would therefore comply with the provisions of Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31 (2013) which, amongst other things, seeks to integrate new development into its surrounds in a way that respects and enhances the local character of the area in which it is located.

Conditions

15. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council. In addition to the standard condition limiting the lifespan of the development a condition requiring its construction to be in accordance with the approved plans is necessary to ensure certainty. A condition requiring the materials used in constructing the extension to match those used in the dwelling is also necessary to ensure that the building integrates successfully with the dwelling and the street scene.

Conclusion

16. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted, subject to conditions.

I Dyer

INSPECTOR