
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 September 2020

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24/09/2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/20/3250465

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 20/00142/FULH, dated 27 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 27 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is a single storey rear infill extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey rear infill extension at 81 Woodland Drive, Watford WD17 3LA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/00142/FULH, dated 27 January 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans: GA/0039/01, GA/0039/02, GA/0039/03, GA/0039/04, GA/0039/05, GA/0039/06, GA/0039/07 & GA/0039/08.
 - 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 Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at No. 79 Woodland Drive with particular regard to light and outlook.

Reasons

3. The appeal property consists of a two storey semi-detached dwelling with a two storey rear extension, single storey side and rear extension and loft conversion with a roof dormer. The appeal site has an extensive planning history, including an application allowed on appeal, but not yet implemented, for additional extensions and alterations in 2019¹. This included a flat roofed rear extension with a staggered form that would project about 3.5m along the common shared boundary with the adjacent property at No. 79 Woodland Drive (No. 79).

¹ 19/00308/FULH

4. The proposal would involve the construction of a single storey flat roofed extension measuring about 1.9m depth by 3.5m width that would infill the gap between the approved rear extension and the common shared boundary with No. 79. The proposal, in combination with existing and the approved extension, would result in an overall rear projection of about 5.75m that would exceed the depth normally recommended for a single storey rear extension on a semi-detached property in the Council's Residential Design Guide 2016 (RDG).
5. The proposed extension would be located adjacent to the two storey property at No. 79 to the south-east of the site. The extension would be set inside the common shared boundary with No. 79 and would be separated from the rooms and garden at the rear of the adjacent property by a high close boarded fence and mature vegetation running between the properties.
6. Whilst I accept that there would be some impact from the development, given the overall height and design of the extension, together with the boundary treatment, the separation distance between the properties and the orientation of the buildings, I consider that the extension would not result in significant loss of daylight and sunlight to the main habitable rooms and garden at the rear of No. 79, nor dominate the views to cause an overbearing effect and an unacceptable sense of enclosure at the rear of No. 79.
7. The outlook at the rear of No. 79 is already toward the boundary fence and the blank brick side elevation of the existing rear extension at No. 81 and the appeal site would be separated by the garden area at the rear of No. 79. As such, I consider the relationship between the proposed extension and the adjacent property would not be significantly different to the existing and approved scheme on the site and does not warrant dismissal of the appeal on these grounds.
8. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed development would not result in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at No. 79 Woodland Drive with particular regard to light and outlook. It would be consistent with the overall aims of Policy UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2013 and the RDG that, amongst other things, seek a high quality design and that an extension must not adversely affect the level of amenity enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Conditions

9. Having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, and in particular paragraph 55, I have considered the conditions suggested by the Council. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have specified the approved plans as this provides certainty. In order to protect the character and appearance of the area, I have also imposed a condition requiring that the external surfaces of the development match those of the existing property.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

David Troy

INSPECTOR