



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 18 May 2021

by James Blackwell LLB (Hons)

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/21/3269101

2 Swiss Avenue, Watford WD18 7LN

- 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 & Mrs Finerty against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01276/FULH, dated 16 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side and rear extension at 2 Swiss Avenue, Watford WD18 7LN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/01276/FULH, dated 16 November 2020, and the plans submitted with it, and 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 drawings referenced 3373 PPL1 Rev C and 3373 PPL2 Rev C.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The extension hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as 2 Swiss Avenue, Watford WD18 7LN.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached two-storey house, located on a corner plot at the junction of Swiss Avenue and Cassiobury Park Avenue. The adjoining house in the pair is 88 Cassiobury Park Avenue. Due to its corner location, the appeal property has frontages on two separate street scenes, with the principal frontage facing towards Cassiobury Park Avenue, and the side elevation of the property fronting Swiss Avenue. The property benefits from an ample garden to the front which is well screened by hedgerow and trees, as well as garden to the side and rear. It has a large gabled bay window on both floors, which is a typical feature of the dwellings in the area.

4. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature which benefits from much attractive greenery, with most properties being semi-detached dwellings which are separated from the road by front gardens and/or driveways.
5. The proposed development consists of a two-storey extension to both the side and rear of the appeal property, which would be used as annexe accommodation for the extended family in conjunction with the main dwelling. The proposed extension would be set back from the main frontage of the appeal property and would have a lower roof line to the principal dwelling. In terms of scale, it would be subordinate to the host dwelling. The materials proposed match the appearance of the main dwelling. Taken together, these factors mean the extension would be harmonious with the host property, and it would not appear overly dominant or visually intrusive when viewed from Cassiobury Park Avenue. This is particularly true, given the mature green screening which obscures the view of both the appeal property and its adjoining neighbour.
6. I acknowledge the Council's concerns that the extension would extend beyond the building line of Swiss Avenue, and therefore be prominent in the general street scene. However, due to its angular corner location and larger plot size, the appeal property and its attached neighbour occupy a unique corner position unlike the rest of the houses in both roads, and sits in a considerably larger plot size than most of the surrounding houses. As such, I do not consider that an extension beyond the building line of Swiss Avenue would be any more or less detrimental to the street scene, as the appeal property is already atypical of the other dwellings along the road due to its siting.
7. Due to the significant plot size of the appeal property, the extension would sit comfortably within its curtilage, whilst still retaining ample garden to the front, side and rear. This would mean that sufficient openness at this corner location would be retained, without significantly harming views north-eastwards along Swiss Avenue and south-westwards from Cassiobury Park Avenue.
8. The fronts of most dwellings along Swiss Avenue run parallel to the road. For this reason, the existing side elevation of the appeal property which faces Swiss Avenue does not properly integrate with this street scene. The proposed development would provide a new frontage to Swiss Avenue, independent of the property's frontage on to Cassiobury Park Avenue. The new frontage would be consistent in design with properties along Swiss Avenue by virtue of the materials used and its front gabled bay feature and would contribute positively to this street scene.
9. During my site visit, it was apparent that numerous properties in the immediate vicinity had been extended to the side on a similar scale to the proposals in this instance, without causing detriment to the street scene in which they were located.
10. For these reasons, I do not consider that the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The proposals are consistent with policies UD1 and SS1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006 – 31 (adopted January 2013), which seek to ensure that new development is of a high-quality design which integrates well with its surroundings. The development would also be consistent with paragraphs 8.2, 8.3, 8.7 and 8.8 of the Residential Design Guide (adopted July 2014 and amended in August 2016) as it meets the size parameters for new extensions, is harmonious with the

host dwelling in terms of size, shape, roof pitch and materials used, and respects and complements the street scenes of both Swiss Avenue and Cassiobury Park Avenue.

Conditions

11. To ensure clarity, I have included a condition specifying the plans which must be adhered to when carrying out the development. To ensure the development integrates appropriately with the street scene, I have also included a condition which requires the materials used to match those of the main dwelling. Given that the proposed development is for annexe accommodation that is ancillary to the appeal property, I have included a condition to regulate this position going forward.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons outlined above and subject to the conditions set out in this decision, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

James Blackwell

INSPECTOR