



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2021 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 September 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/21/3271217

10 Parish Close, Watford, WD25 0JR

- 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 M. Aldous against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01288/FULH, dated 18 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

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

Procedural Matters

3. The Government published on 20 July 2021 a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Whilst I have had regard to the revised national policy as a material consideration in my decision-making, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the issues most relevant to the appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the NPPF. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised NPPF, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers of 9 Parish Close, with particular regard to light and outlook.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site comprises an end-of-terrace dwelling located within an established residential area. The terraced block the appeal property forms part of is characterised by its two double-storey front gables and its staggered layout. The properties on the eastern and western wings of the terrace are symmetrically set-back from the front of the terrace. In light of this, the
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neighbouring property at No.9 is set-back from the appeal dwelling by 3.5m at the rear. On my site visit I also noted that the appeal property appears to be cut into a side bank as ground levels rise slightly to the west of the terrace along the western boundary of the appeal site.

6. The proposed single storey rear extension would abut the common boundary with the neighbouring property at 9 Parish Close and would have a pitched roof with a maximum height of 3.2m sloping down to 2.4m. Due to the rear of No.9 being set-back from the appeal dwelling, the neighbour's rear patio area is already bounded by a two-storey wall along its western boundary. Its corresponding garden is also small, narrow and oriented to the north.
7. Given the existing set-back, and even allowing for the modest additional depth, the rear extension would appear as a particularly obtrusive and overly dominant addition from the neighbouring patio area and would trigger an adverse sense of enclosure. The development would thus result in a significant adverse impact and unacceptably reduce the neighbouring occupiers' outlook and, due to the orientation of the buildings, the amount of light received within the rear garden and ground floor living room.
8. I acknowledge the fact that the proposed rear extension would be cut into the ground however, according to the plans, the highest point of the roof would sit just below the first-floor windows and gradually slope down to match the height of the existing shared boundary fence. However, I find that the rear extension would introduce more built-form above single-storey height directly adjacent to the neighbouring occupant's main private outdoor amenity space. I therefore find the development would adversely impact the living conditions of the occupiers of 9 Parish Close with regards to a loss of outlook and light.
9. Given the above, the development would conflict with Policy SS1 of the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy, section 8.4 of the Watford Residential Design Guide 2016 and the NPPF which together seek to ensure developments are well-designed and do not adversely affect the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

Other Matters

10. The appellant contends the Council did not carry out a site visit and therefore the proposal was not properly assessed. Whilst I sympathise with the appellant's frustration in this regard, this has not had any bearing on my decision-making.
11. I have also acknowledged that the occupant of No.9 expressed support for the scheme however I must assess the development by considering its effect on present as well as future occupiers of the neighbouring property. I have therefore not attributed any significant weight to this point.

Recommendation

12. The development would negatively affect the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at 9 Parish Close with regards to a loss of light and outlook. The proposal would conflict with the development plan taken as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.
13. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR