



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2021

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/21/3277121
115A Langley Road, Watford, WD17 4RP

- 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 Amit Patel against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00360/FULH, dated 9 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2021.
 - The development proposed is part single storey rear extension, first floor rear extensions; garage conversion; first floor side extension; double storey front extension; and loft conversion with front, rear, and left side dormers and right-side roof light.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for part single storey rear extension, first floor rear extensions; garage conversion; first floor side extension; double storey front extension; and loft conversion with front, rear, and left side dormers and right-side roof light at 115A Langley Road, Watford, WD17 4RP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00360/FULH, dated 9 March 2021, 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: PN-001, PN-006, PN-007, PN-008, PN-009, PN-010, PN-011, PN-012, PN-013.
 - 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
 - 4) No development shall commence until fencing has been erected to protect all trees on and adjacent to the site which are subject to Tree Protection Order. No materials, vehicles, fuel or any other items shall be stored or buildings erected inside this fencing. The approved protective fencing shall be retained for the whole period of construction works.
 - 5) The first and second floor windows in the south east side elevation shall be installed and retained with obscure-glazing, and shall be non-opening other than in parts of the windows which are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed.

Reasons

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area. The development plan includes policy UD1 in Watford's Local Plan Part 1- Core Strategy 2006-31

- (2013) which sets out a number of principles to ensure that new development is of a high quality design.
3. The appeal site is located on a busy, tree lined road in which there are mainly large detached dwellings and blocks of flats, of a wide variety of ages, sizes and styles. The variety of built development and the spacious and leafy nature of the plots contributes strongly to the attractive character and appearance of the area.
 4. 115A is a detached two storey house dating from the 1960's which has a hipped roof and a front projecting gable. It has previously been extended to the side and rear and is of no particular merit. The appeal site lies close to a bend in the road behind which is sited a modern block of flats set back from the road behind dense planting. To the other side is a 1960's chalet bungalow of an unusual design. The appeal site is surrounded by trees, some of which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. As such, it has an individual setting and is not seen clearly within the context of other buildings in public views.
 5. The proposals include new extensions to all elevations of the dwelling. The proposed front elevation includes an additional two storey projecting gable, front and side dormers, an increased roof pitch with raised ridge and new windows including fully glazed gables and a two storey side extension. To the rear, the proposals would result in two projecting gables, also with full height glazing and a single storey, flat roof extension across most of the rear elevation. Materials would be a mix of brick and render finishes. The enlarged roof would have a steep pitch with a substantial crown roof in the centre.
 6. The proposals are extensive and would amount to a remodelling of the dwelling to create a contemporary style, three storey dwelling. As such, I consider that paragraph 8.2 in the Council's supplementary planning guidance (SPG) 'Residential Design Guide' (2016) is not relevant in this case because it relates to extensions rather than remodelled dwellings. However, paragraph 8.3 is relevant in seeking to ensure that new development respects the street scene.
 7. The proposed crown roof is substantial in size but would not be unique in this road. The appellant's evidence in an aerial view indicates two other buildings with large crown roofs in the nearby vicinity and whilst those are blocks of flats, the proposed roof would not be uncharacteristic of the area and would, in any case, not be apparent in the street scene or in public views.
 8. I disagree with the Council that the front elevation would be overly complex and cluttered. The proposed new gable would not compete with the wider gable and would instead create some balance to the front elevation. As the side extension and dormers would be set down from the main roof with a lower ridge height, they would be sufficiently subservient to the main part of the remodelled dwelling and would add some interest to the form of the building. The glazed gables are a contemporary feature which together with the glazed rear gables would result in a cohesive design. Similarly, the mix of brick and render finishes would accord with the design approach and is seen on the front elevation of the existing house.
 9. The proposed design represents a cohesive and well-articulated scheme which would be a visual improvement to the existing house and would retain the spacious, leafy character of the plot. I conclude then that the proposed

development would not harm the character and appearance of the dwelling or the area and would accord with the development plan policies referred to above.

Other matters

10. The Council has raised no objection in terms of the effect on neighbouring occupiers' living conditions and from what I have seen the proposal would be acceptable in this regard subject to a condition for obscure glazing in the side elevation with no 115B.
11. The planning system does not seek to restrict tenure in such cases and there is no justification for dismissal of the appeal on this ground.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard commencement condition, a condition is necessary requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, in order to provide certainty. A condition requiring matching external materials is necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area. I have also added a condition for the protection of trees subject to the TPO on and around the site in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. A condition for obscure glazing in the side windows adjacent to no 115B is necessary to protect the privacy and living conditions of the occupier/s of that property.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector