



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/21/3276599

16 Tavistock Road, Watford, WD24 4HL

- 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 Sharon Aninakwa against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00170/FULH, dated 7 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 13 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is a new porch to front of house and new windows to ground floor flank wall to match internal refurbishments.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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 policies SS1 and UD1 in Watford's Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy 2006-31 (2013) which together seek to ensure, amongst other things, high standards of design that respect and enhance the local character of the area. National policy in the National Planning Policy Framework has similar objectives. The Council's supplementary planning guidance (SPG) in its Residential Design Guide (2016) says that porches will not be acceptable where they disrupt the symmetry of a property or the character and appearance of the street scene.
3. 16 Tavistock Road is an inter-war semi-detached dwelling in a street of similar properties on a strong, uniform building line. It is one of several built in an attractive, consistent mock-Tudor style whose distinctive details and features such as dark timber vertical boarding, white render and circular windows, make a positive contribution to the suburban character and appearance of the area. However, the addition of front porches on some dwellings has disrupted the symmetry and building line of those pairs and led to the loss of some attractive detailing, thereby detracting from the street scene.
4. The proposed porch would be very similar to some of those. As the adjoining house does not have a porch and the pair retains much of its original character (despite a hip to gable roof at the adjoining house), the siting of a porch on the front elevation would further disrupt the symmetry of the pair to an unacceptable degree and would not accord with the SPG in this respect. It would extend across a large part of the front elevation between the corner and

the bay window and would project forward of the main wall by nearly 2m. As such, its siting, size and scale would be disproportionate to the front elevation and it would appear unduly dominant and would interrupt the uniform building line of the pair.

5. The proposed design also fails to reflect the flat roof form of the existing canopy over the front door. Whilst the hipped roof would reflect the form of the main roof, it would be shallower in pitch and would not sufficiently reflect the detailed design of the overhanging tiles of the main roof. Moreover, its ridge would not align with the timber boarding at first floor level on the front elevation and this would be visually jarring.
6. The proposed roof form and height would obscure some of the timber boarding and the original circular window opening at ground floor level in the front elevation would also be obscured. Although the scheme includes a new circular window, it lacks the brick on end detailing around the existing window and the new front door would not reflect the period of the dwelling. The loss of these attractive features and the lack of suitable detailing would fail to respect or enhance the character and appearance of the dwelling.
7. Although the appellant has sought to reflect the design of other porches seen in the road, I have not been made aware of the planning status or history of those and in view of this and my site visit observations, I am not persuaded that they set a precedent for allowing this appeal.
8. I conclude then, that by reason of its siting, size, scale, form and poor detailing, the proposed development would significantly harm the character and appearance of the dwelling and the area, contrary to the development plan policies referred to above. There are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector