



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 November 2021

by Victor Callister BA(Hons) PGC(Oxon) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/21/3279736
12 The Thrums, Watford, Herts WD24 6DJ

- 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 Mrs Shaida Ahmed against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00713/FULH, dated 11 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 2 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is a single storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey front extension at 12 The Thrums, Watford, Herts WD24 6DJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00713/FULH, dated 11 May 2021, and the plans submitted with it, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall match those in the existing building.
 - 3) The windows to the wet room in the flank elevation of the extension shall at all times be glazed with obscured glass and no part of that window that is less than 1.7 metres above the floor shall be capable of being opened.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and that of the local area.

Reasons

3. The appeal is a two storey semi-detached house that forms part of an estate development of similar dwellings, built around a large central green. It sits back from the road surrounding the green, with hard standing to the front, providing vehicle parking space. It has been the subject of an extensive rear two storey extension, which does not appear to be readily visible from the public realm, with roughcasting to the dwelling's front and flank walls.

4. The proposal is to remove the existing centrally positioned mono pitched roofed extension, with a larger mono pitched roofed porch with separate wet room. The proposed extension would be 2 metres deep and would stretch from the existing porch location to align with the main flank wall of the appeal dwelling.
5. The proposal follows the refusal by Watford Borough Council of a previous application¹ for a hipped roof extension approximately 0.5 metres deeper than that of the proposal, which would have stretched across the full frontage of the appeal dwelling. The Council's assessment is that the proposal has not overcome the reasons for refusal given for this previous application.
6. The Watford Residential Design Guide 2014 (as amended 2016) (the SPD) sets out that extensions should complement the size, shape, character and roof form of the host dwelling, and be subordinate to it and that of the streetscene of the local area. Further, it states that projections forward of the established building line should be avoided and that porches should be no more than 1 metre in depth, unless the property is set well back from the highway.
7. The proposal would result in an extension deeper and longer than the existing porch, with a mono-pitched roof that would reflect that of the existing porch and the main front roof pitch of the appeal dwelling. Despite being larger than the existing porch, the proposal would not be so large as to appear to dominate the front of the appeal dwelling but would appear to be of a scale entirely subordinate to the appeal dwelling, and also reflective of its design and roof form. Given that the location of the proposal would be set well back from the highway, its 2 metre depth would not appear as excessive.
8. The main building line in the area is defined by the dwelling surrounding the rectangular green, with those located in corner positions, including the appeal dwelling, being set further back than those fronting the green on the 4 sides. All of the dwellings fronting the green have front porches, many of which appear to have been extended or replaced with larger porches or extensions. Despite these porch related changes and additions to the dwellings, the main building line and the streetscene remains defined by their main two storey front elevations. The proposal would reflect this pattern of development and the local streetscene.
9. For these reasons I find that the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the appeal dwelling or that of the streetscene of the local area.
10. The proposal would fully accord with the guidance given in paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3, 8.9 and 8.10 of the SDP which set out the Council's design advice on porches on buildings set back from the highway and extensions developing forward of the existing building line, respecting the streetscene and harmony with the host building. The proposal would also comply with Policies SS1 and UD1 of the Watford Local Plan Part 1-Core Strategy 2006-31 (2013) and section 12 of the NPPF that collectively seek to ensure that development, including that of extensions, is of high quality design, a key aspect of sustainable development.

¹ Planning Ref: 21/00352/FULH

Conditions

11. Along with the standard condition on implementation I have, in the interests of design quality, attached a condition to ensure that the materials used match those of the existing building. To protect privacy, I have imposed a condition relating to glazing of the wet room in the proposed extension.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given, the appeal is allowed.

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR