



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2022

by Julie Dale Clark BA (Hons) DipTP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/D/22/3292461
16 Leaford Crescent, Watford WD24 5TW

- 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 and Mrs Munday against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01450/FULH, dated 1 October 2021, was refused by notice dated 19 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is removal of detached garage building, part single storey, part two storey side extension, new porch/single storey front extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the removal of detached garage building, part single storey, part two storey side extension, new porch/single storey front extension at 16 Leaford Crescent, Watford WD24 5TW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/01450/FULH, dated 1 October 2021, 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 external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: -
 - *1:1250 Location Plan*
 - *Drawing No: 3443 PPL2 C*

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a semi-detached house in a residential area. The adjacent dwelling, No 14 is a detached bungalow and there is a substantial gap between Nos 14 and 16. The attached semi-detached house, No 18, has a front extension.

4. Core Strategy¹ Policy UD 1 sets out a list of design principles which new development should adhere to. The list includes, respecting and enhancing local character. Amongst other things, the Council Residential Design Guide² advises on domestic extensions and indicates that the Council will assess proposals on the basis of the appearance of the house to be extended and the character and appearance of neighbouring properties and the street scene as a whole, amongst other things. It also provides specific advice for side and front extensions.
5. I note that a more recent planning application to extend No 16 has been approved³. From the information submitted this seems to be approximately 700mm narrower than the appeal proposal. The approved scheme includes the front projection. Whilst the Design Guide states that front extensions will not generally be acceptable, in this case the attached house has a front extension and the appeal site itself has a front porch. In any case, this element seems to have been accepted on the later approved scheme and I find no harm arising from this element to either the house itself, the pair of semi-detached houses or the street scene generally.
6. The Design Guide indicates that as a 'rule of thumb', side extensions should not increase the width of the existing house by more than 50%. The approved scheme seems to fall within this whilst the appeal scheme would not. However, this figure is a guide only and due to the design of the proposed extension and the space between No 16 and No 14, the additional width beyond that approved would not appear out of character with the existing house. It would not appear overly large nor would it be an unsympathetic addition. I do not consider therefore that it would conflict with the objectives of the Design Guide or Policy UD 1.
7. The Council suggest conditions in relation to materials and the submitted plans which I have considered in the light of the Planning Practice Guidance⁴. It is necessary that the front and side extension is constructed in material to match the existing house in the interest of ensuring a satisfactory appearance. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning it is also necessary to ensure that the proposal is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
8. I have considered all other matters raised but none alter my conclusion. I conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and would not conflict with Policy UD 1 or the objectives of the Design Guide. The appeal therefore succeeds.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR

¹ Watford Borough Council Watford's Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy 2006 – 31, Adopted 30 January 2013.

² Watford Borough Council Residential Design Guide, Adopted – July 2014, Amended – August 2016.

³ LPA Ref: 21/01735/FULH.

⁴ Planning Practice Guidance, Published 6 March 2014 – Updated 23 July 2019.