



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 July 2023

by J Smith MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/W/23/3317104

798B St. Albans Road, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 9FH

- 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 Jeremy English against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01289/FULH, dated 3 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is: Proposed Rear Dormer to Flat 798b in addition to the approved planning Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/W/21/3276148.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I note that planning permission has been granted on appeal (ref APP/Y1945/W/21/3276148) to extend the first floor residential flat (C3) comprising first floor extensions over the single storey existing extensions to the rear and side at 798 St Albans Road, Watford WD25 9FF). These have not been considered as part of this decision as they already benefit from planning permission.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located on a prominent corner plot at the junction of St. Albans Road and Kilby Close. The host property appears as a medical clinic with residential properties above. There are other residential properties located in the immediate vicinity with a mixture of house types which, I understand, is recognised in a "Character of Area study".
5. The proposal would introduce a dormer to the rear elevation of the host dwelling. The Watford Local Plan 2021 – 2038 contains policies QD6.2 and QD6.4. Policy QD6.2 discusses design principles and indicates that new development should make a positive contribution to the character of the area and be of an appropriate scale. Policy QD6.4 indicates that development should contribute to enhancing the character and identity of a local area. This policy states that the proportions of new buildings need to be appropriate to the existing character of the area.

6. In addition, the Council's Residential Design Guide states that extensions must respect the character and scale of the host building, and should complement the size, shape and character of the existing property and should be subordinate to it. The Residential Design Guide states that dormer windows must be in proportion to the size of the original roof, not exceeding half the width of the existing roof.
7. The proposed dormer would sit across the full width of the original roof of the dwelling, leaving much of the original roof covered by this roof addition. It would be slightly set down from the ridge of the roof and just in from the point of the roof edge closest to Kilby Close. This would create a large flat roof addition to the rear of the property which would fail to compliment the pitched roof design of the original dwelling. As a result, this would create an overly dominant roof development, out of proportion with the original dwelling. Moreover, the proposal would be situated on a highly visible corner plot from visible public vantage points.
8. I appreciate that the building will change its form due to the granting of planning permission for an extension on appeal related to this site (ref APP/Y1945/W/21/3276148). However, I am of no doubt that the proposed dormer would be harmful, regardless of that development.
9. To conclude, the proposal is in conflict with policies QD6.2 and QD6.4. The development would harm the character and appearance of the local area due to its size, scale and large proportion across the full width of the original dwelling roof. In addition, the proposal would be located in a highly prominent position and would be highly visible once constructed. The conflict with the above policies leads me to conclude that there would be conflict with the development plan as a whole.

Other Matters

10. I note that comments have been received from interested parties which relate to the effect of the proposal on residential amenity. As this appeal is dismissed, I have not considered these effects further as this could not alter the outcome of this appeal.
11. The appellant has stated that the proposed development would contribute towards meeting the need for three-bedroom homes within the borough. This is a benefit of the proposal in line with the National Planning Policy Framework which offers encouragement for housing and making good use of land. However, it would not outweigh the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.
12. The appellant refers to the Watford Local Plan Core Strategy 2006-31 (2013), but the Council's decision was based on the policies of the Watford Local Plan 2021 – 2038, which is part of the current development plan.
13. The appellant has provided other examples of dormers which have been constructed in the borough. I have no background information on the granting of permission of these examples. I also note that these examples are in a different location to the appeal site which holds its own characteristics. This appeal has been assessed on its own circumstances.
14. Furthermore, the appellant states that this proposal would be Permitted Development. The question of whether it is permitted development is not a

matter for me to determine in this appeal, which is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission. In any event, the appellant has not explained how this view has been reached. Accordingly, the claim relating to permitted development does not alter my view that the development is unacceptable.

15. The appellant has also raised a previous appeal decision (Appeal Ref: APP/Y1945/W/21/3276148) on this site and states that the dormer will have no material impact on neighbouring properties. However, this would not alleviate the harm found on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area.

Conclusion

16. I have found that there would be harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area and, as such, the proposal would not comply with the Watford Local Plan 2021 – 2038. No material considerations have been shown to have sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, I find that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Smith MRTPI

INSPECTOR