



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2025

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1920/D/24/3353605

30 Christchurch Crescent, Radlett WD7 8AJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Randolphe Limited against the decision of Hertsmere Borough Council.
- The application reference is 24/0475/HSE.
- The development proposed is a first-floor front extension, two-storey side extension, part single- part two-storey rear extension including balcony at first-floor level and alterations to fenestration.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

Description of development

2. The description of development was changed between the submission of the application for planning permission and the Council issuing its decision. I have therefore used the amended description, with minor edits for clarity, in the banner heading above.

Amended drawings

3. The appellant's statement included extracts from amended drawings showing alternative layouts for various parts of the scheme, which it was suggested addressed the Council's concerns. The Procedural Guide¹ advises that "if an applicant thinks that amending their application will overcome the LPA's reasons for refusal, they should normally make a new planning application", and that "it is important that what is considered by the Inspector at appeal is essentially the same scheme that was considered by the LPA and by interested parties at the application stage".
4. The amended drawings include several changes which together substantially alter the proposal. As the revised scheme has not been fully considered by the Council or subject to consultation, having regard to the advice in the Procedural Guide as well as the judgment in *Holborn Studios Ltd*² (which refined the well-known "Wheatcroft Principle"³), I have not taken the amendments into account in my decision, as to do so may prejudice other parties.

¹ Procedural Guide: Planning appeals – England, online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-appeals-procedural-guide/procedural-guide-planning-appeals-england>

² *Holborn Studios Ltd v The Council of the London Borough of Hackney* [2017] EWHC 2823 (Admin)

³ *Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd v SSE* [JPL 1982 P37]

National planning policy

5. On 12 December 2024 the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”), replacing the December 2023 version. The provisions most relevant for determining this appeal were not altered significantly, and as a result I consider that there is no requirement for me to seek further submissions on the revised Framework; I am satisfied that no party’s interests have been prejudiced by my taking this approach. Where I have referred in my decision to specific paragraphs of the Framework, the numbering used is that of the December 2024 version.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed front extension on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

7. No 30 Christchurch Crescent is a two-storey detached dwelling, set well back from the road on a long and relatively narrow plot. It has a hipped roof with a dormer projection on the front slope, and a single storey porch extension with hipped roof in the centre of the front elevation; from its appearance I would suggest that it dates from around the middle part of the 20th century. It is within a residential area just outside the centre of Radlett; while there is a considerable degree of variation in the style and design of the housing along Christchurch Crescent, and some evidence of later infill development, many dwellings are of a similar age to the appeal property, and the area has the appearance of a comfortable and prosperous inter- or post-war suburb.
8. The appeal relates to a range of proposed alterations to No 30, including a two-storey side extension, a part one- and part two-storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration all round, and the erection of a two-storey front extension. The sole reason for refusal on the decision notice issued by the Council relates only to the last of these elements.
9. Part E of the Council’s 2006 *Planning and Design Guide* Supplementary Planning Document (“the SPD”) says that “front extensions that are larger than a porch will be refused if they stand out as bulky, out of character, or adversely change the appearance of house and street”. It goes on to advise that “the roof design, windows and finishing materials should match the original house”.
10. The proposed front extension would be considerably larger than the existing porch it would replace. While its footprint would remain the same, it would be much taller with an eaves height of around 5.5m (approximately the same as the main roof) and a ridge height of around 6.4m. It would have a pitched roof with gable front, rather than a hipped roof to match either the original porch or the main dwelling, and whereas the existing porch (and indeed, much of the rest of the property) is characterised by relatively small windows which are wider than they are tall, the front of the extension would be dominated by a large expanse of glazing with a strong vertical visual emphasis.
11. The appellant’s statement did not directly seek to defend the original proposal, concentrating instead on the changes made in the amended drawings submitted during the appeal. However, as I have explained in setting out the preliminary

matters above, I have not accepted that revised proposal. It would fall to the Council in determining any further planning application to decide whether its concerns have been addressed, so it would not be appropriate for me to comment further on those revisions here.

12. The combination of the factors identified in paragraph 10 above would mean that the front extension would not comply with the advice in the SPD, instead giving it a cumbersome and incongruous appearance which, while it might be suited to a modern dwelling or perhaps a commercial building, would be quite out of keeping with the scale, form and style of the appeal property. Accordingly, I conclude that it would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area.
13. The proposed development would therefore conflict with Policy CS22 of the 2013 Hertsmere Core Strategy, Policy SADM30 of the 2016 Hertsmere Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan, and Policy HD3 of the 2023 Radlett Neighbourhood Plan. Together, and among other things, these policies seek to ensure that development is of a high-quality design which recognises, respects and complements local character. It also would not comply with the provisions of the Framework which seek to achieve well-designed places, notably Paragraph 135 which requires that development is visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and maintains a strong sense of place.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

M Cryan

Inspector