



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 May 2025

by **R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 May 2025

Appeal Reference: APP/Y1945/D/25/3361172

19 Holland Gardens, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 9JN

- 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 Mr. Y. Chow against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 24/01060/FULH.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as “Part single and double storey rear extension, front extension, hip to gable roof extension and rear roof dormer construction”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for “Part single and double storey rear extension, front extension, hip to gable roof extension and rear roof dormer construction”, at 19 Holland Gardens, Watford, Hertfordshire WD25 9JN, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference 24/01060/FULH), subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule of Conditions.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located in a residential area in the northern part of Watford. Holland Gardens is closely built up, predominantly with pairs of semi-detached houses, in conventional forms. The original designs evidently included some traditional features, including Tudor-style timbering, but, in many cases, the houses have been altered and extended over the years.
4. Number 19 Holland Gardens is a semi-detached house (with number 17), sharing with its neighbour a large gable on the front elevation and a main hipped roof. The building incorporates traditional exterior detailing, including patterned timbering, bay windows and vertical tiling.
5. It is now proposed to undertake a scheme of extensions and alterations to number 19, encompassing a part single-storey and part two-storey rear extension, a front extension, a hip-to-gable roof extension and a rear roof dormer construction.
6. The ‘National Planning Policy Framework’ emphasises the aim of “achieving well designed places” in the broadest sense (notably at Section 12), while making effective use of land and encouraging economic activity. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, by adding to the overall quality of the area and

being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, although it is also recognised that appropriate change may include increased densities. The achievement of good design includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation in new development.

7. Policies in the Development Plan also share these basic principles. In particular, Policies QD6.2 and QD6.4 of the 'Watford Local Plan 2021-2038' draw attention to the need to achieve high quality design.
8. The 'Watford Residential Design Guide' (which was adopted in 2014 and amended in 2016) is also relevant, although it does not have the force of the statutory Development Plan. It includes specific guidance on roof extensions and changes to roof forms at paragraph 8.11.
9. The proposed alterations to the front elevation of number 19 Holland Gardens would undoubtedly have an effect on the streetscene. Notably, the semi-detached pair of houses would lose its underlying symmetry by the hip-to-gable roof extension and the introduction of a smaller gable feature on the front elevation at number 19.
10. Even so, there is some variety in the forms and detailing of the existing houses along the frontages in Holland Gardens. Some include a main side gable while there are also examples of smaller decorative gables. I do not accept that these features represent intrinsically poor design and I do not regard the symmetrical character of the original designs as being essential to the environment quality of this locality. The proposed extensions would add to the complexity and interest of the streetscene and are not objectionable in design terms, in my view.
11. The proposed rear extensions would clearly be in keeping with similar extensions on nearby properties (as the Council's report indicates) and they are also acceptable in planning terms.
12. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed extension would be a useful addition to the accommodation at number 19 Holland Gardens. The contribution that the appeal scheme would make to the provision of residential accommodation in the locality, even though it would be limited, weighs in favour of the appeal. I have concluded that the project would not be in conflict with the Development Plan, in principle and that it would not harm the character or appearance of the host building or its surroundings.
13. Hence, I am persuaded that the scheme before me can properly be permitted and, although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
14. I have, however, also considered the need for conditions and, in imposing conditions, I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the Council in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal). I have concluded that the usual conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained.

Roger C. Shrimplin

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:
 - drawing number LP 100 (Location Plan);
 - drawing number Ex 100 (Existing Plans);
 - drawing number Ex 200 (Existing Elevations);
 - drawing number Pr 100-P2 (Proposed Plans);
 - drawing number Pr 103-P1 (Proposed Site Plan);
 - drawing number Pr 200-P2 (Proposed Elevations);
 - drawing number Pr 400 (Existing and Proposed Section A-A).
- 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.