



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 June 2025

by A Phillips MPlan BA CertHE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R3515/W/25/3361076

23 Westwood Avenue, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 4EQ

- 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 Nurjahan Begum against the decision of Ipswich Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is IP/24/00909/FUL.
 - The development proposed is erection of first floor rear and front extensions, and insertion of skylights on side elevations of roof. Conversion of existing garage. Replace glazing with brickwork and apply new tiled roof to the existing conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for erection of first floor rear and front extensions, and insertion of skylights on side elevations of roof. Conversion of existing garage. Replace glazing with brickwork and apply new tiled roof to the existing conservatory at 23 Westwood Avenue, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 4EQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref IP/24/00909/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the 22 January 2025.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans Reference Numbers: - 24100/3 rev. A, 24100/4 rev. A, 24100/5 rev. A, 24100/6 rev A.
 - 3) The external materials of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.
 - 4) Notwithstanding the approved plans, the hereby approved skylight on the northeast facing roof slope, as shown on drawing nos. 24100/4 rev. A and 24100/5 rev. A, shall be provided with glazing to a minimum of level 3 obscurity and non-opening unless installed above 1.7m of the internal finished floor level of the room they serve, and shall thereafter be permanently retained in this approved form.

Preliminary Matters

2. The wording of the proposed development has a relatively minor alteration on the Decision Notice to that which was submitted on the application form, relating to the conservatory element of the proposal. Given the minor alteration to the proposed description, which the appellant has used in their appeal form, and that part of the development has already received approval I have updated the wording to reflect that on the decision notice.

3. It is noted that the Council part approved the application and that the matter of dispute relates to the first floor front/side extension.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The street scene is defined primarily by detached houses in an interwar architectural style, set behind a green verge that benefits from trees and modest driveways. Some of the properties have had first floor front/side extensions over the garage, with generally characterised with a flat roof design. Other dwellings have had 2 storey side extensions, set behind the garage. Both the architecture of the dwellings and the trees in the verge give this street its overall character and appearance of an interwar suburban development.
6. The proposed development is seeking to provide a 1st floor front/side extension over the existing garage (which would be converted into a lounge) with a slight set back from the existing front elevation two storey element.
7. The Council and the appellant have both referred to an extension at 36 Westwood Avenue (No.36). From the plans submitted by the Council, the extension at No.36 is a two storey side extension with minimal setback from the original principal two storey front elevation. A primary difference between the extension at No.36 and the appeal proposal, is that No.36 has sought a large hipped roof element facing sideways instead of a front facing hipped roof extension. While each application is determined on its own planning merits, changes to individual dwellings can materially impact upon the overall character and appearance of a street. Therefore, the extension at No.36 and its minimal setback is material to this proposal.
8. The proposed front facing hipped roof element for 23 Westwood Avenue, is designed as a very subservient addition to the host dwelling and is an architectural improvement when compared to the use of flat roofed 1st floor front/side extensions used on other dwellings in the street. Based on the subservience of the 1st floor front/side extension and that there are several examples of similar extensions, though mostly with flat roofs, the proposal would constitute good design that preserves the character and appearance of the street scene and host dwelling.
9. The existing single storey lean-to garage is an architectural element that is a positive feature within the street. However, its loss is not of such significance to outweigh that the extension overall preserves the character and appearance of the street scene.
10. The guidance provided in the Space and Design Guidelines SPD 2015 seeks first floor level extensions to be set back up to 4m. While this SPD provides a maximum set back, it does not define a minimum. In addition, it is noted that there are existing exceptions to this set back on the street, for instance at No.36. Therefore, while the SPD weighs against the proposal, it does not outweigh that overall; the proposal does preserve the character of the street and host dwelling.

11. It is, therefore, concluded that the proposal complies with Policies DM12 and DM16 of the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document Review 2022, which seek to ensure that new development respects the design of the existing dwelling and its wider setting. The proposal also complies with National Planning Policy Framework that requires high quality design that is sympathetic to the character of the local area.

Other Matters

12. The Council has not raised concerns regarding residential amenity to neighbours (specifically noise pollution) or car parking concerns. However, these are of concern to nearby residents. Excluding the construction period, the first floor front/side extension that brings an existing bedroom window forwards is very unlikely to have any material impact upon the occupants of the adjacent dwelling. Regarding car parking, the proposal does not create additional bedrooms and on this basis is unlikely to create a material increase in the need for parking spaces.
13. Concern has also been raised that the property might become a House in Multiple Occupancy. However, this is not the proposed development before me and therefore this possibility is a neutral factor in my determination.

Conditions

14. While the Council have not suggested a time limit condition, it is noted that this is included on the decision notice as part of the standard template for an approval. I have added this on to ensure clarity. I have also tied the commencement of the 3 years from the date of the allowed part of the development, in order to prevent this appeal decision granting a long time frame for the already permitted part of the development.
15. The approved plan list I have also added for avoidance of doubt to the development that has been approved.
16. The Council and the appellant both have sought materials will match the existing dwelling. This is important to ensure the proposal does preserve the character and appearance of the existing house within the street scene. This also covers condition 3 on the part allowed element on the Council's Decision Notice.
17. It is noted that the Council had added a separate condition (No.2) on the Decision Notice, which has not been requested as part of this decision. Given that the appeal decision is for the entire work, I have repeated this condition as condition 4 in my decision though reworded to ensure clarification between the approved plans and this condition's requirements.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

A Phillips

INSPECTOR