

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2016

by Geoff Underwood BA(Hons) PGDip(Urb Cons) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 6 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/J4525/D/16/3156250

30 Muirfield Drive, Usworth, Washington, NE37 2LS

- 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 & Mrs P Williams against the decision of Sunderland City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00763/FUL, dated 29 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension at 30 Muirfield Drive, Usworth, Washington, NE37 2LS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/00763/FUL, dated 29 April 2016, subject to the following 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 plans: location plan, M7a, M7b and M7c.
 - 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.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised by this appeal is the effect the proposed development would have on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is one of a pair of semi-detached houses located in an estate largely comprising similar dwellings although there is some variation in the detailed design, configuration and layout of other buildings in the vicinity.
 4. Although the south east corner of the proposed extension would be positioned 2m from the boundary at its closest point, it would remain set back from the front of 28 Muirfield Drive and its neighbours to the north which run at right angles to the host building. The front elevations of the pairs of houses which run to the west of the site are staggered in line with the curve of the road resulting in the absence of a consistent building line extending west. In any event the ground floor of the proposal would be in line with No 30's front
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elevation and would not result in the extension protruding beyond the established built form of adjoining houses in either direction.

5. The first floor set back at the front and lower ridge height would give the extension a degree of subservience to the host building, aspects which would comply with the Council's guidance¹ for such development. However, the extension would have the effect of bringing a gable elevation closer to Muirfield Drive as it rises up to the south west and curves around the appeal site. This would render the appeal property slightly more prominent in the streetscene as a result.
6. Nevertheless, although making the resulting building more noticeable along Muirfield Drive in either direction, its scale, massing and layout would respect the qualities of nearby properties and it would remain set back from the road within a side and front garden. Consequently, the proposed extension would not appear dominant or obtrusive in the streetscene as a result of its relationship to existing buildings and the layout of the estate and would not harm the area's character or appearance. Accordingly, the proposal would comply with development plan and national policies² which seek to ensure that development is well designed and responds to an area's character.

Conditions

7. It is necessary to specify the approved plans as this provides certainty. It is necessary to require that materials match the existing property to preserve the area's appearance.

Conclusion

8. For the above reasons the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area and would comply with the development plan, supplementary guidance and national policy. The appeal is therefore allowed.

Geoff Underwood

INSPECTOR

¹ Householder Alterations and Extensions – Local Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document.

² City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan, 1998 Policy B2 and National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 17, 58 and 64.