
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2017

by I Jenkins BSc CEng MICE MCIWEM

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

Decision date: 18 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J4525/D/17/3174533
60A Falkland Road, Sunderland, SR4 6XA

- 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 Daniel Patrickson against the decision of Sunderland City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00280/FUL, dated 14 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side and single-storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. No. 60A is a semi-detached house which is situated on a corner site at the crossroads junction of Falkland Road with General Havelock Road. The alignment of the side gable of No. 60A is consistent with the front building line of neighbouring properties to the rear that front onto Falkland Road, such as No. 60, all being set back from the highway beyond garden areas. Furthermore, the dwellings on 3 of the 4 corner sites at this junction, although not identical in design, are set back from the adjacent highways beyond gardens and the fourth corner is occupied by a large highway verge. These features create a sense of space at the junction that contributes positively to the street scene.
 4. The proposal involves the erection of a two-storey side extension with a single-storey rear annexe. The Council's *Supplementary Planning Document-Household Alterations and Extensions* (SPD) indicates that two-storey side extensions should be subservient to the main house and this would usually involve a ridgeline which is lower than that of the host property and a front wall set back beyond that of the host dwelling, at least at first floor level. The proposed two-storey extension, which would align with the front and rear main walls of the dwelling and share its roof profile, would fill the gap between the existing side gable of No. 60A and its boundary with Falkland Road. Due to its bulk, the two-storey extension would significantly reduce the contribution that the appeal site makes to the sense of space at the junction.
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Furthermore, as a result of the two-storey projection well beyond the front building line of No. 60 and other neighbouring Falkland Road dwellings, the proposal would have a particularly awkward and obtrusive appearance.

5. I conclude that the appeal scheme would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the street scene. In this respect it would conflict with the SPD and Policy B2 of the *City of Sunderland Unitary Development Plan, 1998*, which seeks to ensure that extensions respect and enhance the best qualities of the locality, in keeping with the aims of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework), which indicates that it is proper to seek to promote and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Other matters

6. I understand that the appellant has looked into moving to a larger house in order to provide sufficient accommodation for his growing family. He has indicated that moving would be particularly unsettling for one of his children, due to a medical condition, although that could be managed. Nevertheless, he believes that houses of the size needed would be unaffordable and the only affordable choice is to extend No. 60A. However, according to the application plans, only a single-storey of the proposed two-storey extension would provide additional habitable rooms, the ground floor being occupied for the most part by a garage. I consider it likely therefore that the needs of appellant's family as regards additional accommodation could be met by a far smaller extension with a lessor impact on the street scene. Under the circumstances, in my judgement, the benefits of the proposal cited by the appellant would not outweigh the harm I have identified in relation to the main issue.
7. The appellant has drawn attention to 3 other properties in the area which have been extended. However, whilst I do not know the full circumstances of those cases, it appears that none are directly comparable to the scheme before me. None form part of the street scene in the vicinity of No. 60A. The only one of the 3 with a two-storey extension up to the side boundary of the host property appears to be No. 46 Fordland Place. However, it faces towards a property, on the opposite corner, which also extends up to its side boundary shared with the back edge of the highway footway. In any event, I consider that the existence of those extensions elsewhere in the area would not justify harmful development of the appeal site.
8. Whilst I understand that no neighbouring residents have formally objected to the proposal, I consider that a lack of objections cannot be automatically interpreted as a sign of support, as the propensity of neighbours to object can be influenced by a number of factors. I give this matter little weight.

Conclusions

9. I conclude on balance, that the proposal would not amount to sustainable development under the terms of the Framework and would conflict with the Development Plan taken as a whole. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

I Jenkins

INSPECTOR