



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2020 by Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu BSc MSc MIEMA CEnv AssocRTPI

Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/A4520/D/20/3251788

31 Portchester Grove, Boldon Colliery NE35 9ND

- 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 Scott Barnes against the decision of South Tyneside Council.
 - The application Ref ST/0075/20/HFUL, dated 29 January 2020, was refused by notice dated 14 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is First floor side extension, two storey rear extension, roof extension (including 5no. rooflights and a "Cabrio" balcony) and associated alterations including altered window openings to the front elevation, replacement of windows & external doors, replacement of rainwater goods, fascias & soffits and installation of an external flue to the side elevation of the dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. No. 31 is a two-storey detached dwelling with gable roof. The property has a front porch with garage to the side, a single storey rear conservatory and a timber shed on the left elevation. It is located at a corner plot in a cul-de-sac at the end of Portchester Grove of Harden Park estate in Boldon Colliery. The surrounding area is residential, and the street scene is characterised by a mix of a few bungalows and detached and semi-detached dwellings with gable roofs, front porches and side garages. Some of the properties in the area benefit from first floor extensions above the garage.
5. However, these are set back from the front elevation with a lower ridge line. This creates a subservient appearance on the street scene. There are a few examples where first floor extensions have been constructed flush with the front elevation and roof ridge at the same level as the host property. Nevertheless, subservient first floor extensions are an important characteristic

which help to break up the mass and scale of properties on this residential street.

6. The proposed first floor side extension would not have any setback and would be flush with the front wall of the host dwelling. This is contrary to guidance within South Tyneside's Local Development Framework SPD 9: Householder Developments (2010) (the 'SPD')¹, and not in keeping with the prevailing character of the street. Its roof pitch would also be at the same height as the ridge of the existing dwelling by virtue of creation of a new roof which would be almost two metres above the existing ridge. The proposed roof extension would add substantially to the scale of the dwelling. Taken together with the two-storey rear extension, the proposal as a whole would not be subordinate in scale and proportions to the modest proportions of the original dwelling.
7. The proposal would also be viewed from neighbouring properties such as nos. 29 and 30 Portchester Grove and would be likely to reduce the appreciation nearby occupiers have of the environment within which they live. In addition, the aims of the SPD, the relevant policies of the development plan and the Framework do not limit the need for good design to situations where proposals are visible from the public realm and the harm to the character of the host dwelling weighs against the grant of permission.
8. The appellant's argument that the SPD gives some circumstances in which it is acceptable not to provide a set-back between the front wall of the upper storey extension and the main front wall of the house, or a lowered ridgeline² and that these circumstances apply to the appeal site is acknowledged. However, the cumulative effect of the proposed extensions as a whole would result in a building of excessive scale and massing which would be an incongruous addition to the streetscene.
9. The appellant draws attention to other properties in the area which also have first floor side extensions which are flush with the host property. They have referred specifically to Nos. 29, 8, 12 and 35 Portchester Grove and No. 11 Hambledon Close. However, going by the reference numbers provided, these approvals are of some vintage all preceded the National Planning Policy Framework (the 'Framework'), South Tyneside's Local Development Framework Development Management Policies (2011) (the 'LDF') and the SPD. Therefore, they would have been approved under different guidance and policy considerations applicable at the time.
10. Furthermore, these extensions have not altered the prevailing pattern of development which is for staggered building lines which break up the mass of the host dwellings and add visual interest to the street. The other examples are not of the same scale as the proposal and the site specific circumstances are different due to the location of the host property on a corner plot. This creates a sense of openness which would be eroded by the scale and mass of the extension which would create the appearance of a large unbroken block, in contrast to the staggered building lines that are prevalent.
11. Therefore, the presence of other examples does not alter my conclusions on the harmful effects of the proposal in this instance and it is necessary to

¹ See paragraph 7.2

² See paragraph 7.4

consider the merits of the appeal development and I am required to assess the appeal against current planning policy and guidance.

12. Consequently, I find that by virtue of its bulk, design and cumulative massing that the proposed first floor side extension, two storey rear extension and roof extension would significantly harm the visual appearance of the host dwelling and is inconsistent with the established character of the area. Accordingly, there would be conflict with the aims and objectives of Policy DM1 of the LDF which amongst other things seeks to ensure that new development is designed to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings, and where possible enhance its local setting and reinforce local identity, having particular regard to scale and proportions, alignment, form, use of materials and architectural detailing.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and on that basis, I agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR