



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2022

by C Megginson

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J4525/D/22/3290504

15 Hope Shield, Rickleton, Washington NE38 9JF

- 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 Anthony Singh against the decision of Sunderland City Council.
 - The application Ref 21/02137/FUL, dated 31 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 November 2021.
 - The development proposed is alterations to previously approved planning permissions ref 17/00947/FUL and 20/01267/FUL to make elevational alterations to material selections and adjust the size of a dormer window to the front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. From my site visit, and on the basis of the evidence before me, the dormer window, along with other previously approved additions, have been partially completed and therefore the appeal seeks permission for this retrospectively.
3. In addition to the above, the appellant has indicated that the front elevation of the extended dwelling could be clad in brick slips to match the existing brickwork. Whilst this may well be the case, I am conscious that does not include the side elevations and it is unclear what would be proposed in that respect. Furthermore, this would also represent a change to the proposed development, including its description.
4. In considering whether to accept these changes, I am mindful of the principles of the Wheatcroft case (Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd. v Secretary of State for the Environment and Another 1982). With that in mind, I consider that it would be inappropriate to consider this change as part of the appeal process when it is unclear exactly what is proposed. Additionally, the revised proposal has not been considered by the Council.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. Hope Shield comprises a spacious arrangement of predominantly single storey properties, with large open front gardens, driveways and areas of mature planting. Whilst the properties vary in design, they all share a pleasing

commonality, which derives from their expansive and dominating roofscapes. The small number of two storey properties feature even, small dormer windows, that are set well in and well down within the large roofscape.

7. A few of the properties, including the appeal property, have been extended with large front facing gables. These gables are a strong feature to the front of the properties. However, despite this addition, the other properties on the estate have retained a large area of roofscape and where dormer windows are included, these are small in scale.
8. The appeal proposal has replaced two small, pitched roof dormer windows with a large box dormer. Whilst this is set down from the existing ridge and slightly up from the eaves, it covers the full width of the remaining roofscape. This is a substantial addition to the forward-facing roof scene and stands out as a visually obtrusive and dominant feature. Whilst I appreciate that the appeal property is set well back from the road and on a spacious plot, the removal of such a large area of roofscape sits awkwardly against the positive elements of the streetscene.
9. The appeal proposal also includes the use of render on the previously approved front gable, together with the external walls of the dormer window. One of the characteristics of the properties in the area is their use of brickwork. In contrast, the appeal proposal includes the use of render on a substantial portion of the front elevation, as well as part of the side elevations. To my mind, this would be seriously out of character with the existing streetscene.
10. The appeal scheme therefore results in an incongruous and dominant form of development that unacceptably harms the character and appearance of the streetscene contrary to policy BH1 of the Sunderland City Council Core Strategy and Development Plan (2020) which, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure that new development delivers high quality design and positive improvement which complements the wider street scene. It is also contrary to the Sunderland City Council Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (2021) which states that dormer windows should feature a pitched or hipped roof rather than a flat roof and be designed so as not to dominate the roof slope, with their height and depth kept to a minimum. It would also be at odds with the overarching design aims of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons the proposal conflicts with the development plan and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

C. Megginson

INSPECTOR