
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2022

by David English BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M4510/D/22/3301697

14 Dymock Court, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2FH

- 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 Arron Ramsey against the decision of Newcastle City Council.
 - The application Ref 2022/0412/01/HOU, dated 8 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey domestic side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area, and on the living conditions of the occupiers of 17 Sheen Court with regard to their outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached house situated at the head of a largely open-plan suburban cul-de-sac of mostly similar semi-detached houses. It has an attached flat-roofed single garage to the side beyond which is a narrow side garden bounded by a low close boarded fence.
4. A footpath serving a short row of terraced houses in Sheen Court runs alongside the side and rear gardens of the appeal property. Apart from 17 Sheen Court, which has a low fence around its front garden, the terrace has short, open front gardens laid to grass. An area of grassed open space with some semi-mature trees is located between the gable wall of No 17 and the end of Dymock Court. This arrangement of buildings and spaces within the cul-de-sac and beyond creates a context that presents a pleasant open feeling to the area.
5. Several houses in Dymock Court, including No 12 which adjoins the appeal property, have two-storey side extensions. These are modest in size and have largely been assimilated well into the area without detriment to the scale and form of the existing dwellings or to the characteristic open feeling of the area.
6. The appeal proposal would be significantly wider than other two-storey side extensions in Dymock Court. The extension would result in a two-storey built form extending across effectively the full width of the plot creating a house which is almost twice its original width at first floor level. The extension would

hence be an over-large addition to the side of this modest semi-detached house. This creates a harmful unbalanced appearance to the host property and in the street when viewed with the adjoining semi-detached house. The size of the extension would dominate the space between the host property and the terraced street Sheen Court. This would diminish the current open aspect and so would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The fact that the extension would be finished in materials to match the host dwelling would do little to mitigate this harm.

7. The overall effects of the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of both the host property and the surrounding area. This results in conflict with Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne (March 2015) which requires development to respond positively to local distinctiveness and character. Conflict also arises with Policies DM20 and DM23 of the Newcastle upon Tyne Development and Allocations Plan (June 2020) ('the DAP') which require development to deliver high quality design and respond positively to the character of the area and the building.
8. The Council has informal guidance on how extensions to homes will be considered. Extending Your Home, A Design Guide Series (updated February 2011) advocates that two storey side extensions should normally be designed to appear visually subordinate to the main dwelling, and that extensions to corner plots should be in proportion to the original house. The proposal would be contrary to this guidance.

Living conditions

9. 17 Sheen Court is an end terraced house whose front elevation contains a ground floor window to a main habitable room that faces directly towards the appeal property. There is currently a reasonable separation between that window and the appeal property. A small but perceptible difference in ground level exists between the houses, with No 17 being slightly elevated.
10. The proposal would involve the construction of a two-storey blank gable wall significantly closer and directly in front of the ground floor window to No 17. This would create an oppressive feeling to the outlook from that window. The small difference in ground level does not mitigate this effect. The height and proximity of the appeal proposal to that window would result in harm to living conditions in regard to the outlook afforded to occupiers of that house. The harm created through this arrangement would conflict with Policy DM23 (2.iii.) of the DAP which seeks to ensure development maintains a good standard of outlook for existing and future occupants of buildings.
11. Whilst I note the representations made by the occupiers of No 17, their lack of objection does not negate the harm that would arise. The National Planning Policy Framework requires development to ensure a high standard of amenity for existing and future residents.

Other Matters

12. The appellant draws my attention to several other matters including the fact that no windows are proposed in the gable wall of the extension and that additional off-street parking would be provided. Neither of these matters weigh substantially in favour of the scheme.

13. My attention is also drawn by the appellant to other side extensions in the area. I viewed all those extensions during my site visit. Most of these are some distance from the appeal site and are not seen in a comparable context to the proposal before me. Whilst I recognise that other two-storey extensions exist in the area, this on its own does not weigh in favour of an otherwise harmful development which I have considered having regard to all the information before me.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole, along with all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David English

INSPECTOR