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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2023

**by K Lancaster BA (hons) MSc MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 22 February 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/J4525/D/22/3309574**

**87 Richmond Avenue, Washington Village, Sunderland NE38 7JH**

- 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 Field against the decision of Sunderland City Council.
  - The application Ref 22/01675/FUL, dated 24 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 September 2022.
  - The development proposed is a side extension 2 storey.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

## Reasons

3. The appeal site relates to a semi-detached, two-storey dwelling situated on a corner plot at the head of a cul-de-sac known as Richmond Avenue. The rear of the site abuts the rear access lane to Musgrave Terrace. The site is visible from a small number of public vantage points, including the footpath which runs between Richmond Avenue and the A1231.
4. Due to being sited on a corner plot, the property benefits from a large garden to the side of the property, with smaller gardens to the front and rear. This is a characteristic of the other neighbouring plots and helps to contribute to a sense of openness in the immediate area. This is a stark contrast to the traditional, close-knit terraced dwellings of Musgrave Terrace, visible to the rear.
5. The proposal would replace an existing single storey extension to the side of the property and project forward of the front elevation in the form of a two-storey gable with a pitched roof. The ridge line of the extended part would be set just below the ridge line of the existing property. The side extension would increase the width of the dwelling significantly.
6. The properties within the cul-de-sac have a relatively straightforward design that, despite some differences, are in general harmony with each other in terms of their character and appearance. The building comprising No. 87 and its attached neighbour are broadly symmetrical.
7. During my site visit I observed a number of extensions to other properties, including those identified by the appellant in support of the appeal. I have also

had regard to the appellants statement of case including comments about the consistency of decision making by the Council. However, whilst some similarities could be drawn from these, they are not directly comparable. My attention has been drawn to a gabled feature at No. 75 Richmond Avenue; however, I observed that this would appear to form part of the original design and is replicated on another corner plot a short distance away. The relationship between the two attached properties differs, in that they form an L-shape and the gable feature which is visible forms a side elevation to No.75.

8. By contrast, the appeal site has a side-by-side arrangement, which would be unbalanced by such a large extension. I observed no other similar, side-by-side semi-detached properties within the surrounding area that have been extended with a two-story gabled extension.
9. The scale and design of the proposed front extension is such that it would give rise to a prominent feature that would be significantly at odds with the current appearance of both the existing property and the surrounding area. As such, the proposed extension would be highly conspicuous and represent an incongruous feature within the overall street scene.
10. The existing property is of mostly brick construction under a tiled roof, these materials are commonly found within the immediate area. A small amount of render has been added to the ground floor of the existing front elevation and side extension. I also observed a small number of properties which have introduced some render to their elevation treatments, typically also to a modest degree and at ground floor level.
11. The proposed extension would be substantially finished in render, which would be at odds with the character of the surrounding properties. Accordingly, the extension would result in the introduction of a highly conspicuous form of development to the detriment of the appearance and character of the area.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposed two-storey extension would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area. This would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy BH1 of the Sunderland City Council Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 (2020) (CS) which seeks to ensure that new development delivers high quality design and positive improvement which will be of a scale, massing, layout, appearance and setting which respects and enhances the positive qualities of nearby properties and the locality.
13. The design of the proposed extension would not reflect Sunderland City Council's Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (2021) (SPD) as the side extension would extend by more than half of the width of the original house and would not be set back from the front elevation by at least 1 metre. Whilst the guidance does allow for some flexibility, it also requires extensions to relate satisfactorily to the host property in terms of their scale, design, and appearance.

#### *Other Matters*

14. I have had regard to the desire of the appellant to achieve sustainable development and provide additional accommodation for their family, acknowledging that a corner plot provides limited opportunities for extensions other than to the side of the property. However, this is not an uncommon

scenario and, while I have sympathy to the circumstances described, they are not sufficient to outweigh the harm and policy conflict identified.

15. I have also had regard to the suggested improvements to off-street parking provision within the appeal site. However, I have not been provided with any details of any revised parking arrangements. Even if increased parking provision could be provided within the site, this would only provide limited benefits. Accordingly, I do not consider this outweighs the harm identified above.

### **Conclusion**

16. For the reasons set out above, having considered all the policies drawn to my attention, the conflict with Policy BH1 of the CS leads me to conclude that there is conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations which would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

*K Lancaster*

INSPECTOR