



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 April 2024

by F Harrison BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X1355/D/24/3336935

2 St. Aidans Crescent, Crossgate Moor, Durham DH1 4AP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Colin Barron against the decision of Durham County Council.
 - The application Ref is DM/23/00928/FPA.
 - The development proposed is two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the application form makes reference to the submitted drawings. I have removed this wording in the banner heading above as this is not an act of development in itself.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including the appeal property.

Reasons

4. St. Aidans Crescent is a residential street characterised by semi-detached properties which have a number of extensions and alterations. The appeal property is different and is a detached property. It's location at the end of the street, adjacent to the rear garden of 10 Surtees Drive results in an uncharacteristic wide gap between properties creating a sense of spaciousness that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
5. The proposal would introduce a two-storey side extension that would neither be set back from the main elevation or set down from the ridge height of the as advised in the Residential Amenity Standards Supplementary Planning Document (2023) (SPD) to ensure extensions are subordinate to the original property. Despite the use of materials to match and the roof design reflecting the surrounding roofscape and being designed to look like the property has not been extended, the scale and massing of the proposal would draw the eye. The incongruous form of development would stand very prominently within the street scene, overly intensifying the quantum of built form and altering the spacious character in this section of the street.
6. While at the end of St. Aidans Crescent, the appeal property is not on a corner plot which is occupied by the property at 10 Surtees Drive. Furthermore, the reduction in the gap between the appeal property and 10 Surtees Drive

through the proposal would have a detrimental effect on the street scene. As such the proposal would not meet the exceptions to the guidance on side extensions in the SPD. In addition, there is no substantive evidence that a side extension with a set back from the main elevation and lower ridge height at the appeal location would result in water ingress or tiles being blown off during windy weather.

7. Even if the proposal would not be as wide as the extended semi-detached properties nearby and the proposal would not result in the property being physically attached to another property, the proposal would nevertheless be a substantial development that would erode the existing visual break in the street scene. The appellant seeks to draw comparisons with other examples of properties with side extensions, of which there are a large number, and therefore a feature of the wider area.
8. However, while some of these extensions are not set in from the main elevation or set down from the ridge, they do not sit so prominently in the street scene and therefore do not have the same effect on the character and appearance of the area as the appeal scheme would. Furthermore, the other examples are semi-detached pairs and so have a different appearance to the appeal scheme. The other examples do not therefore, lead me away from my above findings. Moreover, it would not be uncommon for detached properties to have a straight roofline if they have not been extended to the side.
9. Overall, the proposal would be unduly harmful to the character and appearance of the area, including the appeal property, in conflict with Policy 29 of the County Durham Plan (2020). Amongst other things this policy requires extensions to residential properties to be sympathetic to the existing building and the character and appearance of the area.
10. It would also be contrary to the SPD and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks well designed and beautiful places.

Other Matters

11. While the appellant has expressed frustrations with the Council's handling of the case, this does not alter or outweigh my findings which are based on the planning merits of this case.

Conclusion

12. My above findings bring the proposal into conflict with the development plan, read as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate that I should take a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

F Harrison

INSPECTOR