



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 October 2024

by **Andrew McCormack BSc (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P4415/D/24/3349794

16 Whitehead Close, Dinnington, Rotherham S25 2XX

- 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 Ms Lisa Smedley against the decision of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref RB2024/0859, dated 11 June 2024, was refused by notice dated 24 July 2024. The development proposed is first floor front extension above garage and alterations to front bay window at first floor level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have had regard to the appellant's point regarding references to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Whilst it may be the case that the Council's references in its delegated officer report relate to previous versions of the Framework, I am satisfied that the matters addressed remain relevant and of significance in this appeal. Furthermore, the references made by the Council relate to matters that remain within the current version of the Framework (published 19 December 2023) to which I have had regard in determining this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The host property is a two-storey detached house located on a street of similar looking properties. Although the property is slightly set back from the road, it is positioned at a point that is highly visible due to it being at a junction of the highway within Whitehead Close. This allows for longer distance views of the property from the west and from the south along the highway. The proposed scheme is for a first-floor front extension above the existing garage and alterations to the first-floor front bay window.
5. The Council's Householder Design Guide 2020 (HDG) specifically sets out that front extensions can be prominent and will not usually be supported. It is acknowledged that the text of the HDG within 2.4 refers only to terraced and semi-detached properties where two-storey front extensions should be refused. However, the HDG also states that front extensions should not harm the character and appearance of the host property or be of a design that is not in keeping with others in the street. Furthermore, guidance is clearly set out within 1.1 of the HDG that the size and design of an extension should be subsidiary to the existing dwelling, thus allowing the original building to remain dominant. This is

illustrated on page 6 of the HDG which reflects a similar type of extension to a detached property as proposed, identifying it as inappropriate.

6. The proposed extension would have a large, bulky appearance with a twin-gabled roofline at first-floor level to the front elevation. Such a design feature does not prevail in the wider street scene and is not characteristic of properties in the locality which predominantly have a single-storey pitched roof projection to the front elevation with a single gabled roofline at first-floor level. Due to its scale and bulk, the proposal would not appear subservient to the original property and would create conflicting focal points in its front elevation. As such, it would be a visually dominant addition that would be harmful to the property's character and appearance.
7. From what I have seen, no neighbouring properties have two-storey front extensions. The proposal would therefore be out of keeping with the prevailing character of properties in that part of the street scene. Furthermore, I note that the host property forms part of a group of three similarly designed dwellings – along with Nos.12 and 14 – which appears as an element of uniformity the street scene. This does not appear elsewhere in the street. As a result, the proposal would not only dominate the front elevation of the host property but also introduce a substantial design element that would be in stark contrast with, and harmful to, the visual design grouping of the neighbouring dwellings at Nos.12-16.
8. The street has several different design types of dwellings and this is a key feature of the character and appearance of the wider street scene. However, when considered overall, I find that the provision of a two-storey front extension would not be consistent, and in keeping with, the prevailing design elements of the majority of dwellings and the wider area as a whole.
9. It is noted that 17 Whitehead Close (No.17) has an existing two-storey front extension which appears to be similar to the appeal proposal. The details and circumstances of the extension at No.17 are not before me and, in any event, each proposal is to be assessed on its own merits and circumstances. Notwithstanding this, in the case of No.17, due to its position within the wider street scene, the property and its design is viewed as a standalone dwelling rather than as part of a group of similarly designed dwellings. Moreover, No.17 holds a far less visually prominent position in the street scene than the appeal property. As such, the harmful effect of the proposed scheme on the character and appearance of the surrounding area is likely to have a much greater adverse impact than the extension in place at No.17 in its much less visible location.
10. Overall, with all relevant matters considered, I find that the proposed extension would add considerably to the bulk and size of the front elevation of the host property and would not appear subservient in scale or design to the original property. As a result, it would harm the character and appearance of the host property and be unacceptable in terms of its design and dominant appearance. Consequently, such changes to the property in such a prominent position within the street scene would also result in a significant harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area within which it would sit.
11. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposed development would not comply with the design requirements of Policy CS28 of the Rotherham Core Strategy 2014 and Policy SP55 of the Rotherham Sites and Policies Document. Furthermore, the proposal would not accord with the aims of the Council's HDG and relevant advice found in national policy and guidance.

Other Matters

12. I have had regard to all matters raised by the appellant in support of the proposal, including the need for additional space at the appeal property. I appreciate such a need and therefore the intention of the proposed extension. However, this personal benefit for the appellant and their family is insufficient to overcome the significant harm to character and appearance identified in my overall conclusion.

Conclusion

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

A McCormack

Inspector