



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 October 2024

by H Jones BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J4525/D/24/3350026

41 Park Lea, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR3 3TA

- 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 Ms Kathryn White against the decision of Sunderland City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00960/FUL.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension over existing garage and porch extension to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey side extension over existing garage and porch extension to front elevation at 41 Park Lea, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR3 3TA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/00960/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No 01 Sheet 1 Rev B Existing, Drawing No 01 Sheet 2 Rev B Proposed and Drawing No 01 Sheet 3 Rev B Existing and Proposed.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matters

2. Different versions of the proposed floor plans, elevations and roof plans have been submitted. Both appeal parties have clarified that it is "Drawing No 01 Sheet 2 Rev B Proposed" that is the more up to date and is for my determination. I have no reason to disagree. Therefore, I have determined the appeal with regard to "Drawing No 01 Sheet 2 Rev B Proposed", and I have cited it in the conditions above.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. Park Lea is a residential estate which contains a range of house types. Although a number of properties on Park Lea have been extended, the designs vary and, as a result, there is not a clearly established approach in this regard. No 41 Park Lea (No 41) is a detached house situated within a spacious corner plot within the estate. No 41 exhibits a distinctive pitched-roofed gable which addresses the street. The front elevation is partly finished in pebbledash which is framed by some projecting brickwork.
5. The proposed porch extension would replace a porch which already serves the property, and it would be a modestly-scaled addition to the house. The porch would incorporate a pitched roof which would be sympathetic to the property's main roof profile, and it would have a balanced approach to the fenestration. I therefore agree with the Council that this extension would be acceptably designed, and it would have no harmful effects upon the character or appearance of the host property or the area.
6. The front elevation of the proposed side extension would be slightly set-back behind the brickwork frame of the aforementioned gable. The side extension would be constructed in brick, therefore, upon completion of the development, the first floor of the host property would display a balanced mix of brick and pebbledash. Furthermore, the roof ridge of the existing two storey roof and that which would be formed by the extension would run in opposite directions. As a result, even though the extension would be of quite considerable width, and it would not incorporate a set-down roof ridge nor a substantial recess of its front elevation, it would, nevertheless, incorporate design features which would successfully break down its overall scale, mass and roofscape. Consequently, I find that the proposed side extension would not form an excessively large addition to the property nor would it appear harmfully intrusive within the street scene.
7. Footpaths on either side of the common boundary provide separation between No 41 and neighbouring No 51. Their front elevations are set back at different distances from the highway providing for a slight step in their address of the street. These factors would assist in ensuring that a visual distinction would be maintained between Nos 41 and 51 and, as a consequence, a harmful terracing effect would not arise. I find that this would be the case even if the planning permission granted at No 51¹, including for its own first floor side extension, were to be implemented as well as the appeal proposal. That said, No 51's planning permission required commencement shortly before my site visit, there were no obvious signs that it had done, and it may have now expired.
8. For the reasons given above, the proposed development would be acceptably designed, and it would result in no harmful effects upon the character and appearance of the host property or the area. The proposal would accord with Policy BH1 of the Sunderland City Council Core Strategy and Development Plan 2015-2033 which, amongst other matters, sets out that development should provide high quality architecture, detailing and building materials and be of a scale, massing, layout and appearance which respects and enhances the positive qualities of nearby properties and the locality.

¹ Planning permission reference 21/01702/FUL

9. The Sunderland City Council Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) includes some prescriptive guidance in relation to the design and proportions of side extensions. However, it emphasises that each proposal should be considered on its own merits and that it is appropriate to apply the guidance flexibly in certain circumstances. Given the appeal site's particular context, the detached nature of the property and the particular visual effects that would be wrought by the proposal as I have set out above, this is one such case where this flexibility is warranted. As the proposal would be well-designed and would have an acceptable relationship with both the host property and the street scene, it would be compliant with the SPD's guidance.

Conditions

10. I have imposed standard conditions concerning commencement and compliance with the submitted plans which are necessary in the interests of certainty. To protect the character and appearance of the area, a condition is needed to secure the appropriate use of materials.

Conclusion

11. The proposed development accords with the development plan as a whole, and there are no material considerations which indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with it. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions above.

H Jones

INSPECTOR