



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2025

by Darren Hendley BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4515/D/24/3356836

45 Hazeldene, Whitley Bay, North Tyneside NE25 9AL

- 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 Mo Gusbi against the decision of North Tyneside Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01054/FULH.
 - The development proposed is a front dormer extension, rear infill extension and rooflights installation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed front dormer extension on the character and appearance of the building and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprises a semi-detached hipped roof house with a garage to the side. The property has a bay window at ground floor level on the front elevation, with a window positioned above it centrally at the first floor level. A second window at first floor level is found above the front door entrance. More broadly, the property lies in a residential area with a relatively uniform arrangement of either hipped or gable ended properties, some of which have been extended. However, front dormer extensions are not a feature of these surroundings, whereas rooflights or solar panels on front roof slopes are a more common attribute.
4. The Council's Design Quality Supplementary Planning Document (2018) (SPD) advises that dormer windows should be of an appropriate scale and design, taking into account the design of the dwelling and character of the area, and they should always appear visually subordinate. It further states that where there are no dormer windows present in the street, all proposals will be assessed on a case by case basis taking into account the character of the wider area. The design should be in keeping with the character of the street scene.
5. The proposed front dormer extension would involve 2 separate dormer window structures of an individual equal size. Due to the overall size however, it would extend across much of the larger front roof slope that would result from the proposal and so it would not be proportionally scaled. It would result in a top heavy appearance to the extended property, even though each dormer window would be set in from the external walls and below the roof ridge line.

6. In addition, the siting and design of each individual dormer window would mean they would not align with the proposed arrangement of openings that would be found at ground and first floor levels. It would not thus be a symmetrical arrangement in this regard.
7. The proposed front dormer extension would also be prominent in the streetscene because it would be positioned on the street facing roof slope and especially as the absence of other such extensions would draw attention to that it would appear incongruous and discordant. The subtle roof pitches would not adequately overcome this harm. It would not appear visually subordinate with the siting, scale and design, and taking account of the character of the wider area it would not be in keeping.
8. That there are similar designs in the wider Whitley Bay area does not lessen the harm that would arise because front dormer extensions are not present more locally to the site. It is the immediate surroundings that provide the context and the related streetscape is not varied to the extent that it could satisfactorily accommodate the proposed front dormer extension. This does not rely on a subjective assessment because making a planning judgment involves considering the totality of the evidence, and which in this case does not favour what is proposed .
9. I conclude that the proposed front dormer extension would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the building and the area. Accordingly, it would not comply with Policies DM 6.1 and DM 6.2 of the North Tyneside Local Plan (2017) where they concern design that is of a high standard, specific to place and a positive relationship; and that extensions should complement the form and character of the original building, the location in relation to the streetscene, and the effect on the existing property and whether it enhances the overall design, amongst other considerations. It would also not comply with the SPD because it would conflict with its advice on dormer windows.

Other Matters

10. It has been set out that the proposal takes advantage of the solar orientation of the property and thus carbon reduction and energy efficiency, and which is supported by policy. The proposed submitted plans however do not show where the solar panels would be sited if the proposal was to proceed, but they do show that the roof space available on the rear would be limited by the proposed rooflights, if this is the reason that the proposed dormer roof extension would be sited on the street facing roof slope. This matter has a limited bearing, based on the evidence before me.
11. While the National Planning Policy Framework does support an upward extension as is proposed, this is not uncaveated. It is to be consistent with the prevailing form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, where the harm arises in this case. The same applies by way of the proposal providing improved living space for the occupiers in that the resultant design should still need to be of a high quality. None of these matters outweigh the harm that would result.
12. I have also been referred to the discussions which have taken place with the Council over the design, including the merits of alternatives. As an appeal decision is to be based on a planning judgment of the particular proposal, these matters do not though alter my conclusion.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Darren Hendley

INSPECTOR