Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 July 2026 by J Reed MPlan MRTPI

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd September 2026

Appeal Ref: 6007942
24 Ambleside Avenue, South Shields, South Tyneside NE34 0DY

- 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 Amy Hyde against the decision of South Tyneside Council.
- The application Ref is 250412.
- The development proposed is hip to gable conversion; flat roof dormer to rear elevation; rooflights to front elevation.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. Since the Council issued its decision on the planning application, the South Tyneside Local Plan (2026) (STLP) has been adopted. This replaces the South Tyneside Local Development Framework, such that the policies of that plan cited on the decision notice are no longer part of the development plan and have no weight. I have therefore considered the relevant policies within the South Tyneside Local Plan (2026). The Council have provided copies of the relevant STLP policies, and the appellant has had the opportunity to comment upon these.

4. The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in August 2026. I have considered the changes and as they are not material to the proposal, further comments were not sought by the parties.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal dwelling is a two-storey semi-detached property situated on Ambleside Avenue, a residential street characterised by other similar two-storey semi-detached dwellings. The dwellings share key design features such as a hipped roof design which creates a sense of balance that contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.

7. In this context, the proposed hip to gable extension to the appeal dwelling would be read as an unacceptably anomalous feature on the most publicly prominent elevation of the building. Whilst the appeal scheme would utilise the existing dwelling's footprint and would be an efficient way to maximise space, it would negatively impact the hipped symmetry the appeal dwelling possesses with its semi-detached neighbour, which emphasises its incongruity by unbalancing the prevailing character and appearance of the area. I note the reference made by the appellant to other hip to gable extensions in the wider area. Other changes that have taken place elsewhere are the exception rather than the norm. In addition, they do not prevail sufficiently for me to change my findings.

8. The rear dormer would accord with the guidance in the SPD 9: Householder Development (Revised 2014) (the SPD) in terms of being set in from the sides and up from the eaves. However, its size and 'top heavy' form due to its occupation of a majority of the roof slope would conflict with the guidance, which advises that dormer extensions should be subordinate to the host dwelling. This visual intrusion would be readily discernible in views from both the surrounding rear gardens as well as from Buttermere Gardens. Consequently, the dormer would not respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

9. The development would use materials to match the host dwelling and would not result in any significant consequences for the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. However, due to its prominent contrasting gable roof design and increased bulk, overall, the appeal scheme would result in a conspicuous development.

10. I note the appellant's comments that due to the existing two storey side extension there is already an imbalance between the appeal dwelling and its semi-detached neighbour. However, the existing two storey side extension is an appropriately designed subservient addition through virtue of its set down ridge height and setback front elevation. It also retains the hipped roof design of the host dwelling and therefore does not harm the character and appearance of the area unlike the appeal proposals.

11. In regard to the dormer extensions at King George Road, Mortimer Road, Ambleside Avenue, Grasmere Gardens and West Avenue referenced by the appellant, I do not have full details or have been presented with the circumstances of these schemes. Therefore, I cannot be certain that the circumstances are the same as the appeal scheme before me. Nonetheless, the design of these do not represent the prevailing character of the area and I am mindful that each development must be assessed on its own merits. The other examples do not therefore lead me to form a different view.

12. I also acknowledge that even if some elements of the development could be undertaken using the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) it is the totality of the development's scale and design that I have found to be harmful.

13. To conclude, the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and area. As such it conflicts with Policy 47 of the STLP. This seeks, amongst other things, for extensions to be of high-quality design and contribute positively to the character and visual amenity of the Borough's townscape.

14. The proposal would also fail to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and its aims to achieve well designed places.

Other Matters

15. I note the appellant's desire to create more usable space for their family. However, private benefits are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified in relation to the main issue. I have also had regard to the appellant's submission that there are no objections to the proposal. However, the absence of objections is a neutral factor in the balance and does not preclude a full and proper assessment of the planning merits of the case.

16. I also acknowledge the evidence that the proposal would address a particular need for four-bedroom houses in the South Shields area. However, whilst this may be the case I am not persuaded that this could not also be achieved with a scheme that would not harm the character and appearance of the area.

17. The issue of property values has also been raised. It is a well-founded principle that the planning system does not exist in the interests of private matters such as the value of property or land. The Council's handling of the case has not affected my consideration of the planning merits of the scheme.

Conclusion and Recommendation

18. The proposal would not accord with the development plan and, for the other reasons I have set out, material considerations do not attract sufficient weight to indicate a decision other than in accordance therewith. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Reed

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

19. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR