

26 HARTON GROVE SOUTH SHIELDS NE34 6LT

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

For Planning Application purposes.

Harton Grove properties are semi-detached two storey houses. Harton Grove is not a conservation area. The application for planning permission observes recommendations in the South Tyneside local development framework SPD9: Householder Developments (2014).

General Design Guidance and Objectives pinpoint visual impact on the dwelling and the immediate neighbourhood, with regard to high standards of urban design, assuring that there is not unacceptable impact on neighbours in relation to privacy, outlook and overshadowing, or unacceptable impact on highway safety and off-road vehicle parking, trees and root systems. Ibid (2014, 6)

In accordance with good design practice, Section 3, calls for characterization of site-specific circumstances to define an apt design approach.

Site-specific circumstances of the property will always be taken into account and may restrict the scope for development or alternatively may allow for development opportunities beyond the guidelines set out in this document. The main matter for assessment in all cases will be that the proposals achieve the objects set out above. Ibid (2014, 6).

and

Each housing type creates locally distinctive and unique areas within the borough. A well designed extension or alteration should maintain or enhance the character of each area and sense of place, by considering the materials, style, scale and detailing of the original house. Ibid (2014, 7).

Clear emphasis is placed on visual impact and the importance of designs that draw from existing street scene contexts to enhance the quality and character of the property and the area. Context is described as styles which create distinctive housing character.

Each individual property on a street contributes to the 'street scene', which, in itself contributes to the character of the neighbourhood and to the sense of place... Extending or altering the property to a high standard and in keeping with the original design will enhance the quality of the local area...An extension should complement the shape, scale and proportions of the original dwelling to maintain the character of the original dwelling...Extensions should ideally reflect the design and symmetry of the existing property. Ibid (2014,10).

Figures 3.4 and 7.2 illustrate a street of many semidetached dwellings where confining widths of plots are critical. Ibid (2014, 12 and 24). Such critical width is not found in this instance. The application shows a generous 7.748m or thereabouts between side walls of numbers 26 and 28 Harton Grove.

The existing street scene is much different to the examples of side boundaries and building lines shown in Figures 3.4 and 7.2 and designs would not comply with the spirit SPD9 guidance if significant site specific circumstances did not impact on proposals.

The guidance may be relaxed if two of the following criteria exist,

1. *There is a marked stagger in the building line between the dwelling and the affected neighbour.*
2. *The dwelling to be extended is of a substantially different type, scale and massing to the adjacent dwelling.*
3. *The adjacent dwelling is incapable of being extended in the same direction; and*
4. *There is a significant difference in ground levels between the dwelling to be extended and the affected neighbour. Ibid (2014, 25.)*

The criteria list some site arrangements but inevitably cannot pinpoint all possibilities. Altogether it carries a message to designers to note and act on differences. The planning application adopts an inference that the generalized width of plots referred to in SPD 9 is not appropriate and proposals merit relaxation of the stepped back rule in accordance with the spirit and intent of the guidance.

Site walking along Harton Grove raises awarenesses that the street scene is characterized by different forms of side extensions. Some are flush with existing front dwelling walls and without setbacks, others with setbacks that seem to vary from 100mm or so. More importantly, a unique sense of place is provided by multiple gable ends. Dominant formal features that have survived and continue to generate strong architectural bearing.

The proposal takes the gable feature as fundamental to the essential nature of sense of place and repeats it to form architectural repetition and rhythm at high level in accordance with recommendations given in guidance.

Proposals for the installation of a pitch roof on an existing flat roof extension are generally considered to be acceptable. It is advised that any change in roof shape should take account of the character of the existing property and the street scene. Ibid (2014, 35).

Existing access for pedestrians and vehicles is from a single opening in the front boundary wall. Proposals are to widen the existing access and hard standing to allow side by side car parking, and in addition, form a new narrower opening in the front wall for pedestrian access to Harton Grove.

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