

2023/0606

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24 Shortfield Court, Athersley North, Barnsley, S71 3AY

Upward extension of roof height and addition of flat roof box dormer to rear to enable loft conversion.

Site Description

Shortfield Court is located in Athersley and in an area that is principally residential and north of Wakefield Road (A61) – a primary route connecting to the urban centre of Barnsley. New Hope (Laithes Crescent) Methodist Church is located to the east with various educational facilities beyond and to the north. Green Belt land including Standhill Wood is located to the west and south-west.

Shortfield Court has a relatively consistent street scene comprising other two-storey semi-detached and terraced houses of a similar scale and appearance. There are some minor differences to external materials and various additions to different properties. Dwellings to the southern side of Shortfield Court are positioned in a slightly staggered building line with the application site positioned the most forward. The ridge line of the properties in this location are uniform. Dwellings to the eastern and western sides of Shortfield Court are also positioned in slightly staggered building lines but feature staggered ridge heights that step downwards in a north-easterly direction.

The application relates to a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling constructed of brown brickwork, featuring a pitch roof utilising red concrete roof tiles. The dwelling is located to the corner of Shortfield Court with Wakefield Road located to the south (rear) and screened by an established tree line comprising mature specimens. The dwelling is fronted by a driveway bounded by timber panelled fencing with an existing single storey flat roof extension located to the eastern side of the dwelling and constructed of red brickwork. To the rear of the property is a modest sized garden bounded by high timber panelled fencing with an existing large flat roof outbuilding positioned adjacent to the eastern (rear) boundary line.



Planning History

There are no previous planning applications associated with this site.

Proposed Development

The applicant seeks permission for an upward extension of the roof height and the addition of a flat roof box dormer to the rear to enable a loft conversion.

Amended proposals received 3rd August 2023 show that the eaves to the rear of the property would be raised by approximately 0.9 metres with the eaves to the front remaining as existing. The ridge height would also be increased with the ridge point being approximately 0.5 metres higher and set back by approximately 0.6 metres from its original positioning.

The proposed flat roof box dormer would be built off the rear external wall forming the rear elevation of the dwelling and would be approximately 1.5 metres high, projecting by a maximum of approximately 2.4 metres from the roof slope. It would have an approximate width of 7.1 metres and would be set in from both the gable and the party wall with the adjoining property by approximately 0.3 metres and would be set below the ridge.

An existing bedroom would be relocated from the first floor of the original dwelling to be within the converted roof space that would facilitate a larger space.

The proposed upwards extension would use brickwork to match the existing property; red concrete roof tiles would be used for the roof of the dwelling, and the dormer would use red tile cladding to reflect materials in the existing property.



Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the current development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment, and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies which are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means, no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

Local Plan Allocation – Urban Fabric

The site is allocated as Urban Fabric within the adopted Local Plan, which has no specific land allocation and therefore, the following policies are relevant:

- ***Policy D1: High quality design and place making.***
- ***Policy GD1: General Development.***
- ***Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.***
- ***Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety.***

Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations

This document establishes the design principles that specifically apply to the consideration of planning applications for house extensions, roof alterations, outbuildings & other domestic alterations; reflecting the principles of the NPPF, which promote high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. The core of this is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals that align with the Local Plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

- ***Section 12: Achieving well designed places.***

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it creates better places in which to live and work and helps to make development acceptable to communities.

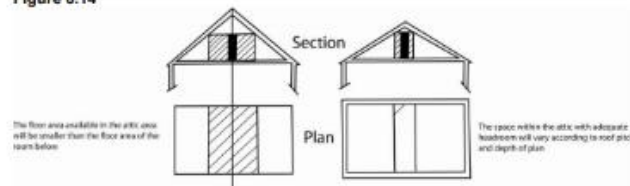
It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces, and wider area development schemes.

Within section 12, paragraph 130 is the most relevant as it indicates that permission should be refused where development is poorly designed and fails to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area and the way that it functions.

The *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations* also provides guidance in relation to specific types of development; dormer windows are outlined in paragraphs 8.31, 8.32, 8.33, 8.34, 8.35, 8.36, 8.37, 8.38, 8.39 and 8.40.

8.31: *When considering whether to install a dormer window you should assess whether there is adequate space within the attic to accommodate a room(s) with adequate headroom without requiring a dormer extension that will dominate the roof (Figure 8.14). In general, providing that the roof pitch allows adequate height, a space approximately half the area of the floor below can be created.*

Figure 8.14



8.32: *The design of the dormer window should reflect the character of the area, the surrounding buildings and the age and appearance of the existing building.*

8.33: *Vertically proportioned dormer windows with pitched roofs are traditionally found in the Barnsley area (Figure 8.15).*

Figure 8.15

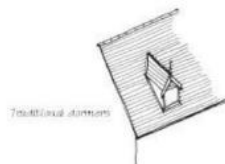
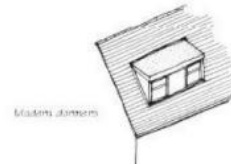


Figure 8.16



8.34: *Flat roof dormers which tend to be larger and have horizontal emphasis can be seen in more recent housing developments. These have proved to be more expensive to maintain and prone to failure (Figure 8.16). Flat roof dormers are considered aesthetically inferior and are not normally acceptable.*

8.35: *Consequently, pitched roof dormers are generally considered more appropriate for both aesthetic and practical reasons.*

8.36: *To assess whether a dormer on the front or principal elevation will be appropriate, the roofs of the surrounding buildings should be examined. Unless the street is characterised by dormers on the frontage, or these are a feature of the area/street/terrace, dormer windows should be located on the rear or secondary elevations.*

8.37: *The positioning of the dormer on the roof will have an impact on both the house and its neighbours.*

Figure 8.17



8.38: So as not to dominate existing roof lines and retain its original form, dormers should be set within the roof plane (see Figure 8.17) and not be built off an external wall. The guidelines below should therefore be followed: -

- The dormer should sit within the roof plane and the top of the dormer should usually be below the ridge (A)
- Dormers and roof lights should be set back from the eaves (B) and gable by at least 0.5m (C)
- They should be at least 0.5m away from the party walls with adjacent properties. (D)

8.39: Where there are existing dormers in the same roof plane, for instance in a terrace, new dormers should line up horizontally.

8.40: It is also important that dormers and roof lights reflect the pattern of existing window openings. They should be positioned to line through vertically with the window openings below.

- Roofing materials for pitched roof dormers should match the main roofing material.
- Unless glazed, the sides (or cheeks) of the dormer should be the same or similar in appearance, particularly in colour to the main roofing material.
- Cladding to the front of the dormer should be minimised.
- Glazing on windows on the side elevation must be obscure.

Consultations

No consultees were consulted on this application.

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties and no responses were received.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The site falls within urban fabric which has no specific land allocation; however, the site and surrounding area is made up principally of housing, therefore, extensions to residential properties are considered acceptable where they do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residents, visual amenity, and highway safety.

Visual Amenity

The *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations* sets out guidance in relation to design principles, outlining the importance of any extension to be designed to be in keeping with the original property and to maintain the character of the neighbourhood. Proposals for extensions are considered acceptable where they do not significantly alter the character of the street scene and would sympathetically reflect the style and proportions of the original dwelling.

The main issue with the proposals being considered is the impact upon the street scene and visual amenity of the area, including the character of the original dwelling. It is appreciated that the proposed development has been amended to attempt to address this issue, including the maintaining of the eaves height to the front of the property; however, this has not been achieved and concerns remain unchanged.

The primary issue lies with the fact that the application property is a semi-detached property prominently located to the corner of Southfield Court and set forward of other properties on the same building line, where those properties also feature pitch roofs with a consistent ridge height. Whilst it is acknowledged that the property is set back from the highway (Shortfield Court) and that most works would be completed to the rear, the rear of the property is visible from public vantage points, particularly from Newstead Road by the junction with Wakefield Road and Wakefield Road.

The proposed development seeks to extend upwards by approximately 0.9 metres, raising the eaves at the rear of the property and raising and repositioning the ridge back from its existing position. Whilst it is acknowledged that to facilitate the desired loft conversion some alterations may be needed; however, this would need to be sensitive and sympathetic to the character and form of the original dwelling. In this instance, the upwards extension and raised roof is considered to be a significant increase that would unnecessarily alter the character of the dwelling and the broader street scene by creating asymmetry and unbalancing an otherwise harmonious pair of semi-detached properties. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the application property is prominently located to the corner of Shortfield Court with prominent views and sight lines available along the road that extends from the junction with High Croft Drive. As such, the raised roof height would be a prominent feature within the street scene and unnecessarily dominant, disrupting the existing cohesiveness between properties.

Furthermore, there are other conflicts with the *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations* regarding the proposed dormer. Paragraphs 8.37 and 8.38 of the SPD state that *'the positioning of a dormer on the roof will have an impact on both the house and its neighbours. So as not to dominate the existing roof lines and retain its original form, dormers should be set within the roof plane and not built off an external wall, including being set below the ridge, and being set back from the eaves, gable, and party walls with adjacent properties by at least 0.5 metres.'*

In this instance, the dormer would be set slightly below the ridge; however, it would be built off an external wall and set in from the gable and party wall with 26 Shortfield Court by approximately 0.3 metres. Moreover, the proximity of the dormer to the ridge of the roof together with the proposed upwards extension would likely give the appearance of a flat roof three-storey dwelling at the rear.

Whilst it is accepted that this is unlikely to significantly impact the street scene, the NPPF and Local Planning Policies are clear that the character of individual buildings should also be considered, and in this instance, the proposed development would significantly alter the form of the original dwelling which, in this instance, is considered to be unduly harmful, especially as the dwelling benefits from a modest sized plot where alternative and more acceptable schemes could be pursued.

The proposals, would therefore, be considered unacceptable and not compliant with *Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making* and would be unacceptable regarding visual amenity.

Residential Amenity

The *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations* sets out guidance in relation to the extensions to ensure that they are designed to limit the impact on neighbouring dwellings. Proposals for extensions are considered acceptable where they do not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The upward extension and subsequent increase in ridge height shown on the amended proposals received 3rd August 2023 would result in some additional overshadowing onto adjoining neighbouring property 26 Shortfield Court; however, as the neighbouring property is set on the same building line and to the west of the applicant address, impacts would be expected to occur and be limited towards the end of the day. Moreover, as the dwelling would be extended upwards and not outwards, impacts would only likely affect the southern roof plane of 26 Shortfield Court; therefore, maintaining existing amenity levels to a reasonable degree.

In terms of overlooking and loss of privacy, the rear-facing habitable room windows of the proposed rear dormer would not directly face any habitable room windows of surrounding neighbouring properties, and approximately 9.8 metres would be maintained between the rear-facing windows of the proposed dormer and the rear (southern) boundary which is screened by an existing established tree line.

The proposals are not considered to result in increased levels of overshadowing, overlooking, or loss of privacy and reduced levels of outlook that would adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties. Therefore, the development is considered acceptable and in compliance with *Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development*. Nevertheless, this does not warrant the approval of a scheme which is considered unacceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity.

Highway Safety

The proposed development would not result in a loss of off-street parking nor the requirement for additional parking provision. The site benefits from existing off-street parking to the front of the property which is of a sufficient size to accommodate two vehicles. As such, the proposals would, therefore, be considered acceptable and in compliance with *Local Plan Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety*.

Conclusion

In conclusion, whilst the proposals would be considered acceptable regarding residential amenity, specific concerns regarding the likely impacts upon the street scene and visual amenity arising from the upwards extension and subsequent increase in roof height remain. The raised roof to this prominently located dwelling would be disruptive to the cohesiveness of existing ridge lines between properties on Shortfield Court and would unbalance an otherwise harmonious pair of semi-detached properties, therefore, altering the dwelling and the street scene in a way that would not be in keeping with the surrounding area. Overall, the scheme introduces asymmetry to the application property that would significantly alter its form and character in an unbalanced and disproportionate way, and

that is considered to be unnecessary and avoidable, especially where there may be opportunities to pursue suitable alternative schemes.

Unfortunately, the proposals, therefore, fail to meet the guidance of *Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions and Other Domestic Alterations* and *Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making*.

Recommendation

Refuse