

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

Application for Review Against the Refusal of Planning Permission for Straightening of both hipped gables, erection of two storey extension with balcony to rear, and erection of replacement garage at 20 Westholme Avenue, Aberdeen AB15 6AA

Application Reference 250516/DPP

For Mr. G Easdown

By Aberdeen City Council (The Council)

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1 Executive Summary

This Appeal Statement is submitted on behalf of Mr. G Easdown (the Appellant) in respect of the decision by Aberdeen City Council to refuse an application for full planning permission at 20 Westholme Avenue, Aberdeen, AB15 6AA , Application Reference 250516/DPP.

The application, lodged on 20th of May 2025 and refused under delegated powers on 15th of August 2025, sought full planning permission for the following works:

- Straightening of both hipped gables
- Erection of a two-storey extension with Juliet balcony to the rear
- Erection of a replacement garage

This Appeal Statement addresses in detail the reasons for refusal and demonstrates that the proposal is fully compliant with the policies of the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4), the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, and the associated Design Guidance.

For the reasons set out herein, the Local Review Body is respectfully requested to uphold this appeal and grant planning permission for the proposed development.

2 Reasons for Refusal

The decision notice dated the 15th of August 2025 provides the following statement on which the Council has based this decision:

“The proposed hip-to-gable extensions of the dwelling, which is sited within a long line of relatively unaltered, traditionally designed mid-20th century granite 1½ storey hip-roofed dwellings, would introduce an overwhelming and dominating scale and roof form that would contrast significantly with the prevailing character of the streetscape on Westholme Avenue. The proposed development would therefore have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of both the application dwelling and the surrounding area, and is thus contrary to Policies 14 (Design, Quality and Place) and 16 (Quality Homes) of National Planning Framework 4, Policies D1 (Quality Placemaking) and H1 (Residential Areas) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, and the Aberdeen Planning Guidance: Householder Development Guide.”

3 Grounds of Appeal

It is submitted that the proposed alterations have been designed to be sympathetic to the character of the existing dwelling. The scale and design have been carefully considered to ensure that the extension integrates with, rather than dominates or overwhelms, the original property.

When assessed within the wider context of the streetscape, the proposal is consistent with the established pattern of development. Westholme Avenue contains a variety of house types, many of which have been subject to alterations and extensions over time. The proposed altered house will sit comfortably within this context and does not represent an incongruous or intrusive form of development.

Furthermore, the design ensures there will be no unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents. The proposal respects privacy, avoids undue overshadowing, and maintains appropriate separation distances.

Accordingly, the proposed development complies with the relevant provisions of National Planning Framework 4 and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, together with associated Design Guidance.

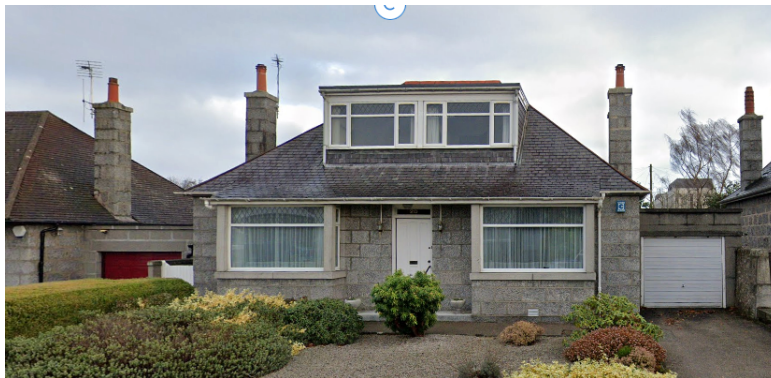
4 Site Appraisal

4.1 Site Description

The appeal property comprises a mid-20th century detached 1.5 storey dwelling, finished with a traditional granite frontage and slate roof, see below. A large box dormer occupies the front/west roof plane, with a smaller sloping dormer to the rear. To the south of the dwelling is a flat-roofed garage.

The property is typical of many houses of its period and style found across Aberdeen. It is neither a listed building, nor located within a conservation area, and therefore is not subject to any heritage-related planning constraints.

View of Appeal Site



4.2 Surrounding Area

The property lies within an established residential area characterised by a variety of house types, ages and styles, many of which have been altered and extended over time. As such, and contrary to the assessment set out in the Report of Handling, it is submitted that Westholme Avenue does not exhibit a uniform or consistent design character. In this context, the proposed development represents an appropriate and proportionate response to its setting and does not undermine the prevailing character of the area.

Examples of the variety of house types, styles and ages in Westholme Avenue are provided below:

No 27 sits perpendicular to the road with the gable facing the street.



No. 16 has been significantly altered to the rear, with a truncated hip roof and red tile finish.



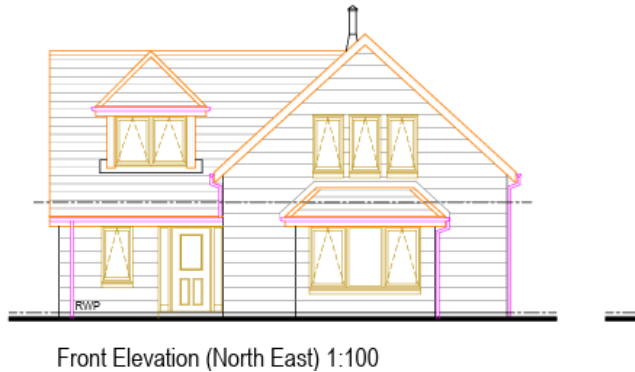
Nos. 11-17 are modern 2-storey detached properties.



“Ar Cala”, adjacent to no. 2 Westholme Avenue, has been altered with straight gables.



Planning consent for a replacement house at 25 Westholme Avenue, directly across the road from the appeal site, was granted in October 2023, Ref 230310. The approved plans indicate a house with straight gables. The Report of handling confirms, “There is already some variety in architectural form along Westholme Avenue.”.



No.32 Angusfield Avenue planning consent granted for a similar scaled development for the erection of 1.5 storey rear extension, straightening of gables, formation of dormers to front and detached garage to rear Ref 221241/DPP approved 13th of July 2023. In approving the proposal, the Report of Handling that the proposal was an “acceptable form of development”. The planning service confirmed that the scheme was of satisfactory scale, massing, materials and design. Additionally, the alterations were considered to have no adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.



32 Angusfield Avenue, before and after alterations

On the face of it, therefore, there appears some uniformity in the street. However, when the street is viewed in detail, there is in fact a range of house types/styles in evidence, with many houses having been altered and extended over the years; these alterations have added to the individuality and overall character of this attractive residential street.

5 Need for the Alterations

The Appellant hopes to extend the house to suit his family situation. Currently, all bedrooms have restricted headroom; bedroom 3 is so significantly restricted that it is hardly usable. The family is well established within this area, with the Appellant working locally and his child attending a local school.

The proposed alterations provide a functional and efficient solution, allowing the Appellant and his family to remain in the community, adapting their home sustainably, in line with NPF4 principles of making best use of existing housing stock.

6 Planning History

There is no planning history relevant to the current house.

7 Design Process

7.1 Design Brief

The Appellant seeks to extend his home in order to better meet his family's needs. At present, the upper floor accommodation is significantly constrained by sloping ceilings, which restrict headroom across all bedrooms. The proposed development will allow the Appellant and his family to make full and efficient use of their property, providing functional, adaptable and comfortable living space without the need to re-locate.

The extension has been designed to be cost-effective and sustainable, whilst respecting the character of the property and its surroundings.

7.2 Development Proposals

The current application seeks full planning permission for alterations and extensions to the existing dwelling at 20 Westholme Avenue, comprising:

- The erection of a two-storey rear extension with Juliet balcony
- The erection of a replacement garage
- The straightening of both hipped gables to facilitate additional upper-floor accommodation

Each element of the proposal, together with the comments of the Planning Service as recorded in the Report of Handling, are considered below.

- **Two-Storey Rear Extension**

The proposed extension runs the length of the rear elevation, providing a modern open-plan kitchen, living, and dining area, with direct access onto the east-facing rear garden. The extension is to be finished in black standing-seam cladding, offering a clear but complementary distinction between the original house and the new addition.

The Report of Handling acknowledged that this element of the proposal would be acceptable in conjunction with the hip-to-gable extensions. However, it stated that, if considered in isolation, the scale of the extension might not appear visually subservient to the original dwelling.

- **Replacement Garage**

The proposal also includes the replacement of the existing flat-roofed garage on the south side of the house, to be re-built in a similar position. The new garage is to be finished in an off-white roughcast, consistent with the established materials palette in the surrounding area.

The Report of Handling confirmed that both the side extension and the replacement garage are appropriate in the site context and would not adversely impact the character or appearance of the dwelling or the wider area.

- **Straightening of Hipped Gables**

To enable the formation of four usable bedrooms at upper-floor level, the roof is to be altered by straightening both hipped gables. The front dormer on the west elevation will remain as existing, while at the rear, the house will be extended over the rear kitchen/dining area, incorporating a Juliet balcony. Additional rooflights are proposed on the north and south elevations to provide light for the upper floor rooms.

The Report of Handling concluded that this element was unacceptable on the basis that the hip-to-gable extensions would introduce an “overwhelming and dominating scale and roof form” contrasting with the prevailing character of the streetscape along Westholme Avenue.

Key Points of Agreement from the Report of Handling

It is important to note that the Report of Handling confirmed the following points of non-contention:

- No adverse impacts on privacy
- No loss of sunlight or daylight to neighbouring properties
- The proposal does not constitute overdevelopment of the site
- The proposal would not result in the loss of open space

Accordingly, the area of concern identified by the Planning Service relates to the straightening of the hipped gables; if this were considered acceptable, then the rear extension would also be acceptable.

Assessment of Hip-to-Gable Alterations

The Planning Service’s main reason for refusal relates to the straightening of the hipped gables, which it considered would introduce an “overwhelming and dominating scale and roof form” out of keeping with the character of Westholme Avenue. It is submitted that this assessment does not accurately reflect either the design quality of the proposal, or the prevailing character of the area.

Streetscape Context

As demonstrated, Westholme Avenue does not exhibit a uniform architectural character. Instead, it comprises a range of mid-century detached dwellings alongside more recent alterations, extensions and new-build homes. Many of these properties already display variations in roof form, including extended dormers, altered gables, and enlarged roofscapes.

Proportion and Design

The proposed hip-to-gable alterations have been carefully designed to remain proportionate to the scale of the existing dwelling. The front elevation, which makes the greatest contribution to the streetscape, will retain its established granite frontage and slate roof with the dormer remaining as is, the only change being the straightening of the roof profile. The scale of the new roof form is modest

and balanced in relation to the overall dwelling, and it does not project forward or upwards in a way that would overwhelm the property.

At the rear, the extension will deliver additional accommodation without significant loss of garden ground, in a discreet location, largely screened from public view.

Amenity and Functionality

The hip-to-gable alterations are driven by functional need, allowing the creation of four usable bedrooms at upper-floor level. Without this change, the existing roof form and sloping ceilings severely restrict headroom and limit the practical use of the first floor. This is a reasonable and proportionate adaptation that supports the efficient and sustainable use of land and buildings, fully in line with the principles of NPF4 which encourage best use of existing land and buildings within urban areas.

Precedent

Within Aberdeen, traditionally there are a range of original designs, with some properties having hipped roofs, and others having straight gables. Hip-to-gable extensions are commonplace on mid-century dwellings of this type. They are widely accepted as a proportionate and established form of roof alteration that allows houses to remain functional and sustainable for modern family living; an example of these alterations can be seen in the locality at 32 Angusfield Avenue. The proposal at 20 Westholme Avenue is fully consistent with this approach.

7.3 Sustainability

The Appellant is committed to ensuring that the house is sustainable. It is submitted that maximising the opportunities within the existing house is sustainable in itself. The proposed alterations include high levels of insulation to comply with current building regulations. Further, the alteration works will allow the installation of an electric charging point.

8 Development Plan Policy

8.1 National Planning Framework 4

NPF4 was adopted on 13th February 2023 and now forms part of the development plan. Considering the policies of relevance to the current application:

Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)

Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis.

When considering all development proposals, significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.

Policy 2 Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change.

a) Development proposals will be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

Response to Policies 1 and 2: while the current proposal is small scale, it is considered that by maximising the opportunities of this existing house, allowing the Appellant to stay in their home close to their work and family commitments, and by providing highly insulated adaptable accommodation allowing the appellant and family to live in their homes longer, fulfils the policy intents of minimising waste and emissions.

Policy 14 Liveable Places Design, quality and place

Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate the application of the Place Principle and create connected and compact neighbourhoods where people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable distance of their home, preferably by walking, wheeling or cycling or using sustainable transport options.

a) Development proposals will be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in urban or rural locations and regardless of scale.

b) Development proposals will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places:

Healthy: Supporting the prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health.

Pleasant: Supporting attractive natural and built spaces.

Connected: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency.

Distinctive: Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity.

Sustainable: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience, and integrating nature positive, biodiversity solutions.

Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

Response to Policy 14: The proposal seeks to maximise the opportunities of the existing home. The house is located within an established residential area, where there is a mix of house types and examples of alterations and extensions are evident; these differences contribute to the character of the area. The house benefits from easy access to local facilities and services and therefore adheres to

the principles of local living. The proposal will result in alterations similar to those previously approved in Aberdeen. The extension and alterations will allow the family to continue to live in the area where they are well established with work and family commitments close by. The house benefits from easy and convenient access to the local roads and well-lit footpath network which connects them safely to the wider area. The proposed house has been designed to complement the immediate area, while providing adaptable accommodation allowing residents to live-long term in their home.

It is therefore submitted that the proposal complies with Policy 14 Liveable Spaces

Policy 16 Quality homes

Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate the delivery of more high quality, affordable and sustainable homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities across Scotland.

g) Householder development proposals will be supported where they:

- i. do not have a detrimental impact on the character or environmental quality of the home and the surrounding area in terms of size, design and materials; and
- ii. do not have a detrimental effect on the neighbouring properties in terms of physical impact, overshadowing or overlooking.

Response to Policy 16: The design of the alterations has been designed to provide additional accommodation whilst not having a detrimental impact on the character or environmental quality of the house. The proposed alterations will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties by virtue of the physical impact, overshadowing or overlooking.

It is therefore submitted that the development accords with NPF4 policy 16-part g.

8.2 Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 (ALDP)

The ALDP is the extant plan and is therefore the primary consideration in determining the outcome of this appeal. The following policies and guidance are relevant:

- Policy D1 – Quality Placemaking by Design
- Policy D2 – Amenity
- Policy H1 – Residential Areas

In addition, the following Aberdeen Planning Guidance documents are relevant:

- Householder Development Guide (HDG)
- Materials Guidance

Considering the policies of relevance:

Policy D1 – Quality Placemaking by Design

Policy D1 requires all development to achieve high standards of design, contributing to distinctive, sustainable, and successful places, and assessed against six essential qualities (distinctive, welcoming, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, adaptable, resource efficient).

Response to Policy D1: The design of the extension and alterations has been carefully considered within its context. The proposal provides a high-quality and adaptable home, allowing the Appellant and his family to continue living in the community where they are well established whilst meeting their accommodation needs. The design retains the granite frontage and uses appropriate modern materials to clearly distinguish between old and new elements.

The scheme responds positively to Policy D1 by:

- ensuring architectural quality and appropriate materials;
- providing adaptable accommodation that makes efficient use of the site;
- contributing to the social and environmental sustainability of the neighbourhood.

Accordingly, the proposal complies with Policy D1.

Policy D2 – Amenity

Policy D2 seeks to ensure new development delivers adequate levels of amenity for occupiers and neighbours, including privacy, sunlight, daylight, and outlook.

Response to Policy D2: The Report of Handling confirms that the proposal will not result in any loss of residential amenity for neighbouring properties. Privacy, daylight, and outlook for the neighbouring properties are unaffected. The internal alterations and extensions also improve the amenity of the existing property by creating usable accommodation.

Accordingly, the proposal complies with Policy D2.

Policy H1 – Residential Areas

Policy H1 supports householder development where it:

1. does not constitute over-development;
2. does not adversely impact residential amenity or the character and appearance of the area;
and
3. does not result in the loss of open space.

Response to Policy H1: The application is for extensions and roof alterations to an existing detached property. The Report of Handling confirmed that the proposal:

- does not constitute overdevelopment;
- does not result in the loss of open space;

- does not impact the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of privacy, overshadowing, or loss of sunlight/daylight; and
- incorporates alterations and materials which are acceptable in principle.

The main issue identified relates to the design of the alterations, specifically the straightening of the hipped gables. The appeal site is not listed nor located in a conservation area and therefore has no heritage designation. It has been demonstrated that the surrounding residential area includes a variety of house types, many of which have been altered and extended. Indeed, in granting permission for a replacement house at 25 Westholme Avenue, the Council confirmed that the street accommodates a “variety of architectural forms.”.

The proposed alterations will produce a house comparable in appearance to “Ar Cala”, adjacent to no. 2 Westholme Avenue. This demonstrates that the proposed alterations will sit comfortably in the street context.

It is therefore submitted that the proposal complies with Policy H1.

Householder Development Guide (HDG)

The HDG sets out principles for extensions and alterations.

- **Design Compatibility** – Extensions should be compatible in design, scale, and materials; should not overwhelm or dominate the original dwelling; and should be visually subservient.

Response: The proposed straightening of the hipped gables allows better use of the upper floor. As confirmed by the Planning Service in their consideration of the proposed replacement house at 25 Westholme Avenue, there is “variety of architectural forms” in the street, therefore it is reasonable to conclude that the street is not uniform in design. The finished house will appear similar to “Ar Cala” adjacent to no. 2 Westholme Avenue, and to no. 32 Angusfield Avenue, both of which sit comfortably within the respective streetscapes. The front elevation will remain largely unaltered, apart from the straightened hips, ensuring the proposal integrates appropriately without appearing incongruous.

- **Amenity** – Extensions must not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

Response: The Report of Handling confirmed no adverse impact on privacy, daylight, or amenity.

- **Precedent** – Historic approvals do not justify new development.

Response: While it is accepted that previous approvals do not set a precedent, they do demonstrate the evolving nature of the street. Indeed, it is submitted that the existing and proposed alterations and extension contribute to the overall character of the area.

- **Site Coverage** – The footprint of extensions should not exceed twice that of the original dwelling, and no more than 50% of garden ground should be developed.

Response: The Report of Handling confirmed there is no overdevelopment.

Dormer Guidance: The front dormer remains unchanged and complies with the detailed design requirements for dormers set out in the HDG. The section of the guide relating to hipped-roof extensions applies to semi-detached houses only and is therefore not relevant to this detached dwelling.

Accordingly, the proposal complies with the Householder Development Guide.

Aberdeen Planning Guidance – Materials

The Report of Handling confirmed that proposed materials are generally acceptable. The proposed new gables are to be constructed in granite, and while further detailing on sourcing and finish is required, this can reasonably be secured by condition.

It is submitted that subject to an appropriate condition, the proposal complies with the Materials Guidance.

In summary, overall, the proposal complies with the relevant policies of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 and the associated guidance.

9 Discussion

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended requires that planning decisions be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This Appeal Statement has set out a clear response to the decision of Aberdeen City Council to refuse planning application Ref: 250516/DPP for alterations and extension to the dwelling at 20 Westholme Avenue, Aberdeen.

The proposal comprises three principal elements:

- A two-storey rear extension;
- A replacement garage; and
- The straightening of the hipped gables with associated roof alterations.

The Report of Handling confirmed that:

- The rear extension is acceptable in design and material terms;
- The replacement garage is acceptable in both form and finish;
- The proposal would not constitute overdevelopment of the site;
- There would be no loss of open space;
- There would be no unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity, including privacy, daylight, or sunlight; and
- The proposed materials are generally acceptable, subject to further detailing.

Hence, the main area of concern relates to the proposed straightening of the hipped gables.

It has been demonstrated within this Statement that:

- Westholme Avenue does not exhibit a uniform architectural character, but instead includes a wide variety of dwelling types and alterations; this is confirmed in the previous Council assessment as it related to the re-development of 25 Westholme Avenue;

- The proposal is proportionate, contextually appropriate, and comparable to existing nearby properties, including “Ar Cala” adjacent to no. 2 Westholme Avenue, the recently altered property at 32 Angusfield Avenue, and the recently approved re-development at No. 25 Westholme Avenue;
- The alterations are necessary to provide functional accommodation at upper-floor level, improving the amenity of the Appellants,
- The alterations make best use of an existing home within Aberdeen, supporting local living, and;
- The proposal fully accords with the policies of the National Planning Framework 4, the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, and associated Planning Guidance.

On this basis, it is respectfully submitted that the Planning Service has placed undue weight on a perceived uniformity of character which does not reflect the reality of the streetscape. The proposal represents a high-quality, sustainable adaptation of an existing dwelling that safeguards amenity, respects local character, and makes efficient use of land.

For these reasons, the Local Review Body is respectfully requested to uphold this appeal and grant planning permission for the proposed development at 20 Westholme Avenue, Aberdeen.

September 2025.