

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2016

by Roy Merrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 16 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/16/3155924

102 Chase Meadows, The Chase, Blyth NE24 4LB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Kris Burnett against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01780/FUL, dated 22 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 13 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a loft conversion at 102 Chase Meadows, The Chase, Blyth NE24 4LB in accordance with the application Ref 16/01780/FUL, dated 22 May 2016 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2960/001; 2960/002; 2960/003; 2960/004; 2960/005; 2960/006; 2960/007; 2960/008; 2960/009A; 2960/010A; 2960/011A; 2960/012A; 2960/013A.
 - 3) No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Preliminary Matter

2. Whilst the appellant was providing access to the site he asked me if I would view a nearby dwelling at 37 Chase Meadows, which he considered comparable to the appeal proposal. I agreed to do this unaccompanied and have set out my findings later in the decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the original dwelling and the wider area.
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Reasons

4. The appeal site is within an extensive modern residential estate. The immediate surroundings are characterised by two storey detached dwellings of similar height and appearance.
5. To achieve the loft conversion it is proposed to raise the walls of the dwelling by 1.2 metres, and to install dormer windows to the rear and rooflights to the front elevation. However the angle of slope of the main roof would not be changed when compared with the current pitch.
6. The proposed upward extension of the dwelling would result in it appearing more prominent within the street scene. However it is situated at the end of a short line of four dwellings which mark a turn in the cul de sac. Within this short line of dwellings, No 104 stands out as different in design, utilising different materials and projecting further forward. The proposal would not therefore interrupt any strong sense of uniformity in terms of the appearance or position of dwellings within this part of the street.
7. In addition I noted during my visit that two of the dwellings nearby, at Nos 96 and 101, appear to incorporate rooms within the roof space. Whilst these dwellings are different in design to the current proposal, they have resulted in a steeper pitch of roof and taller ridgeline when compared with the adjacent properties. This therefore adds a further element of variation within the street scene which would help to mitigate the impact of the current proposal.
8. The extension would ensure that the key characteristics of the original dwelling, including the position and proportion of openings at ground and first floor levels and the appearance of the roof profile when viewed from the street, would remain in place. The relatively limited increase in height would not appear disproportionate in scale to the main dwelling or result in an overbearing visual impact on the street scene.
9. Whilst I noted that a loft conversion would appear to have been carried out at No 37 Chase Meadows as referred to by the appellant, this property is in a different part of the estate, some distance from the appeal site. That alteration does not therefore have a bearing on the merits of the current proposal.
10. I therefore conclude that the loft conversion would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the original dwelling and the wider area. Accordingly it would be in keeping with Policy DC28 of the Blyth Valley Development Control Policies Document 2007 and Policy ENV2 of the Blyth Valley Core Strategy 2007 insofar as they seek to protect the built environment from inappropriate development and ensure that extensions are well related to the existing building.

Other Matters

11. Local residents have objected on the basis that the proposal would result in the rear of their properties being overlooked. In this regard The Council consider that there is sufficient separation between the properties to avoid any significant loss of privacy and amenity. From the information before me and having visited the site I have no reason to take a contrary view.
12. The Council officer's report has referred to an overbearing impact on neighbouring properties. However I am satisfied that the proposed increase in

height of the dwelling would not result in harm to outlook for residents taking into account the separation between buildings.

13. Concern has also been expressed with regard to loss of property value that may be experienced. I am, however, unable to attach any significant weight to this matter as it is not the purpose of the planning system to arbitrate over competing private interests.

Conditions and Conclusion

14. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should succeed and planning permission be granted.
15. Conditions specifying the plans and requiring details to be agreed of the materials to be used in the external surfaces of the extension are needed to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Roy Merrett

INSPECTOR