
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 13 October 2017

by C L Humphrey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17th October 2017

Appeal A Ref: APP/P2935/D/17/3179857

Normont, B6319 C234 Fourstones Main Road, Fourstones NE47 5DT

- 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 S Armstrong against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00639/FUL, dated 22 February 2017, was refused by notice dated 20 April 2017.
 - The development proposed is construction of single storey garage.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/P2935/D/17/3179858

Normont, B6319 C234 Fourstones Main Road, Fourstones NE47 5DT

- 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 S Armstrong against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01728/FUL, dated 15 May 2017, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is construction of single storey garage.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed and Appeal B is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Council withdrew the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy (NLPCS) in July 2017. Therefore, although there is reference to NLPCS policies in the submitted evidence they are no longer material considerations and so I have not had regard to them in determining these appeals.
3. I observed during my site visit that the site of the proposed garage has been excavated and levelled, concrete retaining panels installed to the north, east and west sides of the area and the ground covered in concrete.
4. I note from the submitted evidence that an application for a certificate of lawfulness in respect of a proposed outbuilding on the appeal site was refused by the Council in September 2017. This is the subject of a separate appeal (Ref APP/P2935/X/17/3184485) and is not before me for determination.

Main Issues

5. Based on the evidence before me, in respect of Appeal A, the main issues are whether or not the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of Part 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and development plan policy; and the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.
6. In respect of Appeal B, the Council's delegated report concludes that the proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Whether inappropriate development

7. The appeal site is located in the village of Fourstones, which falls within the Green Belt as identified in the Tynedale District Local Plan (the LP). Policy NE7 of the LP states that within the Green Belt planning permission will only be granted for the construction of new buildings for certain purposes; one of these purposes is limited infilling within the boundaries in existing villages. This is broadly consistent with the 5th bullet point of paragraph 89 of the Framework, which states that limited infilling in villages is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
8. The proposal would be a detached garage located within the rear garden of a residential property in Fourstones. As such, it would constitute limited infilling in a village. Therefore, in respect of Appeal A, I conclude that the proposal would not be inappropriate development within the Green Belt for the purposes of Part 9 of the Framework and LP Policy NE7.

Character and appearance

9. The existing property on the appeal site is a modest single storey red brick and grey tile bungalow situated in a short row of dwellings which face the main road through the village. The land slopes steeply up to the north and so the dwellings are set significantly higher than the road. Properties within the row are of differing materials and designs and feature a variety of single storey side extensions and detached outbuildings.
10. Both appeal schemes propose the erection of a detached single storey garage of just under 8m wide and 6m deep situated at the eastern side of the site and occupying a substantial proportion of the back garden. The garage proposed in Appeal A would have a grey steel box profile pitched roof measuring around 2.5m to the eaves and 3.5m to the ridge with an overhang of approximately 1m beyond the front elevation. The front would be of block work construction, with the other walls constructed of the existing concrete panels with grey box profile sheets above. The garage door would be a steel roller shutter.
11. The garage proposed in Appeal B would also have a deep overhanging roof across the front elevation, which would be about 2.5m to eaves level but with a steeper pitch rising to a ridge height of around 4.3m. The roof would be slate, the walls clad in vertical timber board and the garage door would be timber.

12. In both cases the proposed garage would sit below the rising ground level to the rear of the site. However, the site of the proposed garage is significantly higher than the road and there is a substantial gap to the side of the bungalow through which the garage would be seen. This, in combination with the considerable footprint and height of the garage proposed in both schemes in relation to the modest bungalow and garden, would give rise to an extremely prominent feature within the street scene and surrounding area.
13. The predominant use of box profile metal sheets on the roof and walls of the garage proposed in Appeal A would lend the structure an industrial appearance. This would be incongruous in the surrounding residential context where a softer palette of brick, pebble dash, stone and slate are in evidence. With regard to Appeal B, the proposed slate roofing materials would reflect nearby properties and the use of timber cladding on the walls would not be inappropriate for a garden outbuilding.
14. I note that there was previously a garage at the appeal site. However, based on the evidence before me, this does not appear to have been as substantial as those proposed in Appeals A and B. Consequently, no direct comparisons can be drawn between the previous structure and those proposed and I therefore give this matter little weight. In any event, I am required to reach conclusions based on the individual circumstances of these appeals and have done so.
15. The appellant makes reference to a single storey side extension and outbuilding which could be erected under permitted development rights. However, there are no details of such schemes before me and I therefore give this matter little weight. As noted above, an application for a certificate of lawfulness in respect of a proposed outbuilding was refused by the Council and is the subject of a separate appeal. The outcome of that appeal will be unaffected by my determination of these appeals.
16. For the reasons set out above I conclude that, by virtue of its footprint, height and siting, the development proposed in both Appeal A and Appeal B would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. This harm would be exacerbated by the alien appearance of the materials proposed in respect of Appeal A. Therefore, the appeal proposals would fail to accord with the design aims of Policy BE1 of the Tynedale District Local Development Framework Core Strategy, LP Policy GD2 and the Framework.

Conclusions

17. I have found that, for the purposes of Part 9 of the Framework and development plan policy, the garage proposed in Appeal A would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, in respect of both Appeal A and Appeal B, I have found that the proposals would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area.
18. For the reasons set out above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

CL Humphrey

INSPECTOR