
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 October 2019

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/19/3224466

21 Windsor Crescent, Ovingham, Prudhoe NE42 6AS

- 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 and Mrs J & R Edger against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 18/04268/FUL, dated 4 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 13 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is the insertion of two dormers and construction of porch to the front elevation; rear roof extension dormer; and erection of rear ground floor single storey extension to provide living accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the insertion of two dormers and construction of porch to the front elevation; rear roof extension dormer; and erection of rear ground floor single storey extension to provide living accommodation at 21 Windsor Crescent, Ovingham, Prudhoe in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 18/04268/FUL, dated 4 December 2018, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location plan, 624.6, 624.2C, 624.3B and 624.5B.
 - 3) The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the works hereby permitted shall match those of the existing dwelling.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect on the character and appearance of the area; and the effect on the living conditions of the neighbouring residents with regard to outlook and light.

Reasons

3. The proposal would result in a new porch which is not of concern to the Council. I also find it to be satisfactory with regard to its design and
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appearance. Concerns have been raised with regard to the other three elements of the proposal and I address them individually below.

Front dormers

4. The proposal would result in the addition of two front dormers to this two storey property. The wider area includes houses that are of relatively simple and uniform designs. Dormer windows are not a feature of the area. However, the proposed dormers would be relatively modest structures that would not dominate the original form of the roof. They would be of the same size and design as those in the property directly opposite at 10 Windsor Crescent. I understand that the Council accepted these in May 2015.
5. Whilst the existing dormers at number 10 do not represent particularly positive design features, they do not result in harm to the character or appearance of the area. As the Tynedale Local Plan 2000 (LP) and the Tynedale Core Strategy 2007 (CS) were adopted when those dormers were approved and as there does not appear to have been any changes in circumstances with regard to the development plan since, I find no reason to reach a different conclusion with regard to the currently proposed dormers to that previously reached by the Council with regard to the front dormers opposite. I do not therefore find unacceptable conflict with the design requirements of LP policies GD2(a) and H33; or CS policy BE1(c).
6. The dormers would not result in any material increase in shading and would not be over dominant when experienced from the neighbouring properties. They would not therefore conflict with the amenity requirements of LP policy GD2(e & f).

Rear dormer

7. The proposal includes a large box style dormer that would dominate the rear roof slope. It would not be visible from the public realm. It would appear to fall within the tolerances of permitted development and could therefore be built without formal consent. I am mindful also that the Council accepted a very similar structure to the rear of number 10 which is now clearly apparent in public views. Whilst the proposal is not of a high standard of design, it would not have an impact on the character or appearance of the area. It would offer only similar views from its windows to those of the windows below; it would not result in any significant increase in shading; and it would not be overbearing. In these particular circumstances and as it is likely that it would be built in any event as permitted development, I find no reason to resist it.

Rear extension

8. The rear extension would be six metres deep. It would replace an existing outbuilding to the north and as a result its position and size would have no significant impact on the residents of the neighbouring property, 19 Windsor Crescent.
9. It would be built half a metre from the boundary with 23 Windsor Crescent. The building would have a central ridge and as a result, the eaves would be closest to the neighbouring property and would be relatively low. The boundary is currently defined by a very thick and relatively high hedge, although the

eaves of the extension would be higher. The outlook from the neighbouring rear living room window is already constrained by the presence of the hedge. I acknowledge that a hedge boundary can bring a number of benefits and accept that any reduction in outlook that results from it, may not be perceived as being harmful or directly comparable to a solid boundary.

10. I am mindful that the proposed wall and eaves would be set away from the boundary and that an extension of up to three metres deep could be built directly against the boundary as permitted development. The orientation of the properties ensures that there would be no increase in shading. The low eaves of the six metres deep extension, although set away from the boundary, would marginally reduce the outlook from the neighbouring windows and rear garden area. However, whilst a greater set back from the boundary would reduce the impact and be more neighbourly, the proposed arrangement would not be unacceptably harmful to the living conditions of the neighbouring residents with regard to loss of outlook, despite the depth of the extension proposed.
11. The structure would be large with regard to floor space when considered alongside the original footprint of the dwelling but the property has a large garden and the extension would be comfortably accommodated within it. It would have a roof that would not match the main roof pitch but this would not be in public view. It would be of a satisfactory design quality in these circumstances. Overall, there would not be unacceptable conflict with the design or amenity requirements of LP policies GD2 and H33; or CS policy BE1.

Conclusions

12. I have had regard to the concerns that were originally raised by the neighbouring residents and also those identified by the Council. However, the loft conversion would not have any significant impact on the neighbouring properties and in the circumstances of this case, would have a satisfactory appearance. The rear extension would not reduce direct sunlight to the neighbouring property because of the orientation of the houses and whilst it would marginally increase the sense of enclosure experienced by the neighbouring residents, this would not be unacceptably harmful. I am mindful also of the particular circumstances of the appellants and the benefits that the proposal would bring to their family. Overall, I am not satisfied that the matters that weigh against the proposal are sufficient to justify resisting the proposed works. I therefore allow the appeal.
13. I have imposed conditions relating to the commencement of development and the details of the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt. I have required that the materials match to ensure that the development has a satisfactory appearance.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR