



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020 by Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu BSc MSc MIEMA CEnv AssocRTPI

Decision by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/19/3240338

1 South View, Lesbury, NE66 3PZ

- 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 Keith Wear against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 19/00519/FUL, dated 11 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. As described above, the proposal relates to a two storey side extension. The plans originally submitted to the Council (drawing number 85/18 Sheet 2 revision 1) depict the extension with a living room, shower room and utility room at ground floor level and two bedrooms at first floor level. The extension was shown to be flush with the front elevation of the property but was deeper than the original house, such that it would project beyond the rear elevation. The roofline was shown marginally below the ridge of the main house.
4. Prior to the application being determined the appellant submitted revised drawings of the proposal to the Council in an attempt to overcome its concerns (drawing number 85/18 Sheet 2 revision 2). The revision altered the depth of the proposal so that the rear element would be flush with the rear wall of the house and showed a slightly reduced ridgeline for the proposed element. However, the Council suggest that the revised plan was submitted 'for comment' and that it was not formally considered because the Council was of the view that it would not overcome its concerns. Thus, the Council determined the application on the basis of the original plans.
5. An appeal is made against the decision of the Council and, in most circumstances, the appeal is based on plans considered by the Council at the application stage. It is not the function of an appeal to consider amendments

to a proposed scheme. Where amendments are formally made at the application stage the Council may need to reconsult on the amended proposals and such consultation is not possible within the scope of an appeal. Consequently, in the interests of fairness and for the purposes of clarity this appeal relates to the Council's decision and assessment of the proposal is based on documents considered by the Council in reaching their decision. Therefore, the proposed plan considered in deciding this appeal is: Proposed Plans and Elevations drawing number 85/18 Sheet 2 revision 1.

6. Somewhat confusingly, 2 different plans with that reference number have been submitted with the appeal. However, the only difference between those plans appears to be in relation to the way in which the roofline of the original dwelling is portrayed. There appears to be no difference in the proposed element of the scheme. On one version, the ridgeline of the forward-facing gable at the end of the row is shown to be higher than the pitched roof of the rest of the property. On the other, the ridgeline of the gable and the main body of the house (and the rest of the row) are shown to be flush with one another. From what I could see on site the latter is the accurate representation of the existing roof arrangement and I have considered the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

7. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

8. No.1 is an end terrace two storey dwelling which is part of a block of five properties on South View. The surrounding area is predominantly residential with a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties and there is a railway line and coal depot in the immediate vicinity. This stretch of South View has three blocks of terraced properties. There is a strong uniformity in design of the blocks of symmetrical properties with two matching rows, either side of a centrally placed pair of matching semi-detached dwellings. The two properties at opposing ends of the matching rows have forward facing gables with steeply pitched 'catslide' roofs which add to the symmetry and interest of the group of properties. The uniform scale of terrace's roof line, the depth of the blocks with established building line and the pleasing symmetry are key features which create an appearance of a unified street scene and contribute to the character of the area.
9. The proposed two storey side extension would be wider and deeper than the existing dwelling and would fail to respect the uniformity in the scale of the existing properties within the row. Moreover, by virtue of its bulk and height, the proposal would dominate the side facing elevation of the property and the shallow pitch of the roofline would fail to reflect the much steeper angle of the current catslide roof which is an attractive feature in the street scene.
10. The dwelling is an end terrace property that is sited in a corner plot at the junction of South View and Curly Lane, opposite the entrance to the Alnmouth to Alnwick Railway Station. Thus, the site is clearly visible from the public domain. By virtue of its scale, mass, design and siting the two-storey extension would not appear subservient to the existing dwelling and would have an overly dominant appearance within the street scene. The proposal would introduce an

incongruous feature into the otherwise symmetrical block of terraced properties and would result in an alien form of development. The contribution that the host property and adjoining dwellings make to the appearance of the street scene would be diminished as a result. The mass and scale of the proposal would appear out-of-keeping with the external appearance of the dwelling and the form of the extension would be visually harmful to the area's established symmetrical character.

11. The appellant argues that there are other examples of similar extensions on South View. I note the photographs of Nos 41, 11, 21 and 31 South View, but the information provided does not give a clear picture of whether planning permission was granted for no. 31. In contrast to the appeal dwelling, no. 41 is a detached property with the extension to the rear, while nos. 11 and 21 are semi-detached properties. As such, the context for these developments is not the same as the appeal proposal being considered here and reference to other developments is not a reason to justify visually harmful development. The appeal property is located at one end of a block of properties which display a high degree of consistency and the proposal would significantly disrupt the rhythm and balance of the row.
12. I find that the development would significantly harm the visual appearance of the host dwelling and is inconsistent with the established character of the street. Accordingly, there would be conflict with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy S16 of Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2007) which amongst other things seek to ensure that new development achieve a high standard of design, reflecting local character and distinctiveness having regard to their layout, scale and appearance.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and on that basis, I agree that the appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR