



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020

by Mark Harbottle BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M4510/D/19/3237125

9 York Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 6ET

- 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 Arran Ingram against the decision of Newcastle upon Tyne City Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/0211/01/DET, dated 4 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of a roof extension to rear of property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed extension would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Summerhill Conservation Area.

Procedural matter

3. The proposal and the description of development changed during the application process. I have based my decision on the scheme without dormer windows, as shown on drawing 24830-1011 rev H.

Reasons

4. Summerhill Conservation Area is characterised by Georgian and early Victorian terraced housing and the significant open spaces of Summerhill Square and Westgate Hill Cemetery. Within this area, York Street, Summerhill Street and Lancaster Street are quiet residential roads of 2 storey houses with brick street elevations and a mix of materials on their rear elevations.
5. A small number of houses in these 3 streets have dormer windows and, within York Street, Nos 25, 26, 27 and 28 form a small enclave with raised rear rooflines, appearing as 3 storey buildings from the rear. Variations in boundaries, rear extensions, outbuildings and materials are also found. Nevertheless, the broad cohesion in the scale and form of the terraces in these streets, including rooflines stepping up the hill, away from the River Tyne, is representative of a period when the City rapidly expanded in a grid iron pattern and contributes to the significance of the Conservation Area.
6. Although there are variations in the rear roofscape of the terrace at 3 to 29 York Street, including raised eaves and shallower roof profiles at Nos 25 and 27, and some instances of tiles having replaced slates, it retains a cohesive

- identity. Its original form can be seen in the stepping of rooflines and chimneys, and the appeal property currently contributes positively to this, and thereby to the significance of the Conservation Area.
7. While the form of extension proposed may be found elsewhere in the City, the pitch of the rear roof plane would diverge significantly from neighbouring houses in the terrace and would be markedly shallower than Nos 25 and 27, more akin to a flat roof when viewed from ground level. It would be surfaced in membrane, replacing the slates currently in situ, and where this change in materials would be visible it would add to the perception of a built form that is uncharacteristic of the Conservation Area.
 8. As such, the proposed extension's form and roofing material would reduce the impression of cohesiveness that derives from the stepped progression of roofs and chimneys with limited variation in roof profiles and the narrow palette of roofing materials within the Conservation Area. On my visit I saw this would not only be visible from the back lane to the rear of the terrace, but also from an adjacent open area in Drybeck Court and from Rye Hill beyond.
 9. For these reasons, the extension would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Accordingly, it would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, a matter that must be afforded great weight.
 10. Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The appellant contends that any less than substantial harm would be outweighed by improvements in the accessibility and usability of the attic that would ensure the continued viability of the dwelling. However, it has not been suggested that those improvements are solely dependent on the extension as proposed and I have not been presented with viability evidence. Therefore, while the project would realise important benefits for the appellant, they can only be afforded limited weight in this decision.

Conclusion

11. Overall, the proposed extension would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Summerhill Conservation Area, and so would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of that heritage asset. In the absence of any public benefits to outweigh this harm, the proposal conflicts with development plan policies CS15 and EN1.1, which require development to integrate into its setting, respond positively to local distinctiveness and character, and conserve and enhance the historic environment. For similar reasons, the proposal conflicts with Part 16 of the Framework, which requires development to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment, while allowing for appropriate innovation or change.
12. Accordingly, the proposed development is unacceptable, and the appeal should not succeed.

Mark Harbottle

INSPECTOR