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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 November 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: 27 November 2020**

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### **Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/20/3259328**

### **17 West Road, Prudhoe NE42 6HP**

- 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 James Wardle against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
  - The application Ref 20/01111/FUL, dated 6 April 2020, was refused by notice 1 July 2020.
  - The development proposed is to provide loft room in existing room and associated external and internal modifications<sup>1</sup>.
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### **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.

### **Preliminary Matters**

3. Prior to the point at which the application was determined the appellant submitted various revised plans in an attempt to overcome the Council's objection to the scheme. Revisions A and B were both before the Council at the point at which the application was determined. According to the appellant the Council mistakenly considered Revision A when he had asked them to consider Revision B. I have no reason to doubt that was his understanding of events and the email trail submitted would seem to support that position.
4. Following the refusal the appellant submitted a further scheme to the Council, Revision C, which reduced the dimensions of the proposed roof extension. In correspondence he indicated that he would like that scheme to be considered at appeal. The Council indicated that the amendments would not overcome its concerns.
5. Under normal circumstances an appeal is determined on the basis of plans that were considered by the Council at the application stage. That is so that all parties have a fair crack of the whip in terms of being able to comment on the proposals and to ensure that no prejudice arises if amended plans were

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from Council decision letter as this is a more appropriate description.

considered without interested parties having the chance to consider the amendments. In this case, the amendments in Revision C reduce the scale of the proposal and the main issue is one of design as opposed to neighbouring amenity. I am satisfied that the amendments would have no greater impact on any neighbouring property and the views of the Council and the appellant on the merits of the proposal are clear.

6. In those circumstances, and having regard to the apparent confusion over which plan the Council was asked to consider at the application stage, I am satisfied that no prejudice would arise if I were to consider the appeal on the basis of Revision C. That is how I shall proceed.

### **Main Issue**

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

### **Reasons for the Recommendation**

8. No.17 is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with gable roof located on West Road in Prudhoe. The property is set below and back from the road and is attached to no.16 West Road which is a two-storey dwelling with cross hipped roof known as Tyne View. I understand that the two properties were formerly a single dwelling prior to being sub-divided. Tyne View has a more formal, grander, appearance in terms of its architectural style and the cottage at No.17 has a more vernacular appearance with a simple pitched roof, smaller window openings and modest lean-to extension to the front. It appears as a subservient annex to the larger house and the contrast in styles provides visual interest whereby each element retains a distinct character.
9. The street scene is characterised by a mixture of housing types of differing size, design, material and roof design. However, amongst the more modern properties, there are numerous traditional cottages on West Road within the immediate vicinity. These share many characteristics with the appeal dwelling in terms of their modest scale, their alignment parallel to the road, and the simple pitched roofs (generally in blue slate), with little ornamentation. By and large, the roof planes remain intact, with few examples of dormers or other roof extensions facing West Road. Those simple cottages add to the character of the area and the contrast between them and more recent interventions is a notable feature of this stretch of West Road.
10. In contrast to the pleasingly simple style of the original cottage the roof form would be unlike any other on the street. The loft room would project above the ridgeline of the cottage, a factor that would draw the eye and add to the prominence of the alteration. In addition, the hexagonal plan form, complex roof arrangement and forward-facing clock tower would represent an extremely elaborate addition that would contrast awkwardly with the very simple form of the original roof. It may be a feature one may expect to find atop a more formal or classical dwelling or stable house but would appear as an alien addition to this simple yet attractive property.
11. I recognise that the structure would utilise matching slates and that it would be set back from the highway. However, the materials alone would not disguise the harm that would be caused by the style, which would be completely at odds with the form of the original house. In addition, whilst shielded to a degree,

views would still be available from the adjacent road and the structure would draw the eye on account of its height above the ridge and incongruous appearance.

12. Consequently, I find that the proposal would cause harm to the appearance of the original dwelling and the wider area. Whilst it would be set below the ridge of the adjacent Tyne View, the alterations would significantly erode the simple appearance of the host property which presently reads as a subsidiary annex to the larger dwelling. Thus, the relationship between the two properties would be harmed through the introduction of an elaborate addition to the modest lower section of the original dwelling.
13. For all of those reasons I find that the proposal would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the original building and would result in an incongruous and inappropriate form of development that would be harmful to the character of the surrounding area. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with the design related policies of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies GD2 and H33 of Tynedale District Local Plan (2000) and Policy BE1 of Tynedale Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2007) which amongst other things seeks to ensure that new development respect the character of the existing building, the surrounding area and the amenities of nearby residents.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

14. For the reasons given above and having had regard to evidence before me, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Ifeanyi Chukwujekwu*

APPEALS PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

15. 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