



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 January 2021

by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/20/3262287

Beulah House, 123 Bondicar Terrace, Blyth NE24 2JZ

- 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 Derek Bolton against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02052/FUL, dated 1 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 8 September 2020.
 - The development proposed is rear ground floor extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for rear ground floor extension at Beulah House, 123 Bondicar Terrace, Blyth NE24 2JZ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20/02052/FUL, dated 1 July 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan; Existing Views Sheet 2; and Roof & Site Sheet 3.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Preliminary Matter

2. At my site visit I saw that the proposed development had commenced. I have proceeded to determine this appeal on that basis

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building, with due regard to the Blyth Bondicar Terrace Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. Beulah House is a substantial detached building set in its own grounds, and is located within the Blyth Bondicar Terrace Conservation Area (CA). The CA is characterised by a mixture of building types representative of historic development extending from the Town Centre, and the appeal property is representative of an area of Victorian and Edwardian suburbs that contribute to the importance of the CA as a designated heritage asset.

5. The property is also identified as a Locally Listed Building of local architectural/historic significance. As well as its architectural quality, the evidence suggests that this significance also arises from the past use of the building as a maternity hospital and the value placed on this by the community. The appellant submits that the building is not locally listed for the purposes of the development plan. However, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) only requires heritage assets to be identified by the local planning authority. Regardless of the adopted status of Appendix VIII referred to by the Council, I consider that this is an appropriate basis on which to identify heritage assets and I have considered this appeal accordingly.
6. The main elevation of the building faces onto Marine Terrace, with the proposed extension located on the rear elevation facing onto an enclosed garden and parking area. The Council expresses concern that the proposed extension projects beyond the existing rear return and kitchen extension, and does not achieve appropriate symmetry.
7. However, the ground floor as it currently exists is not of a symmetrical appearance, with a rear door and windows being offset and a ground floor extension located on only one side of the building. A detached garage is also offset within the rear parking area. Unlike the relatively symmetrical upper floor, the ground floor of this rear elevation is also not readily visible from the public realm. Moreover, the neighbouring dwellings in the CA are also not of a symmetrical appearance or rhythm, and the appellant has provided evidence that the historical layout of the appeal site to the rear was not of a symmetrical character. Within this context, the modest ground floor extension would not harm the character and appearance of the host property, even allowing for its limited projection beyond the rear return.
8. I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character or appearance of the host building. It would also preserve the character and appearance of the CA and would not harm the significance of the building as a heritage asset. The proposal would therefore not conflict with policy DC28 of the Blyth Valley Development Control Policies 2007 or policy ENV 2 of the Blyth Valley Core Strategy 2007 in respect of design and the effect on the historic and built environment. The proposal would also not conflict with the Framework in respect of achieving well-designed places and conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed. A condition relating to a time limitation for commencement is not required as the development has commenced. I have imposed a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted plans in the interests of certainty. The proposed development is depicted on a plan titled 'Existing Views', and this is reflected in the condition. A condition requiring matching materials is appropriate in the interests of character and appearance.

David Cross

INSPECTOR