



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 February 2021

by J Hunter BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M4510/W/20/3264117

228, Westgate Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 6AP

- 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 Suffyan Akram against the decision of Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/0414/01/DET, dated 27 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as erection of 2no dormers to front elevation and 1 no. dormer to the rear elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed in so far as it relates to the 2no dormers to the front elevation. The appeal is allowed in so far as it relates to 1no. dormer window to the rear elevation of 228, Westgate Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE4 6AP in accordance with the terms of the planning application Ref 2020/0414/01/DET dated 27 March 2020 and drawing numbers 19132-01 and 19132-04 so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 19132-01 and 19132-04.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a 19th century mid terraced townhouse located in a prominent position on a main thoroughfare into Newcastle City Centre. The property has been altered quite substantially, there is render to the principal façade, Upvc windows and a large flat roofed front extension at basement level which in commercial use.
4. Despite the alterations and extensions, it is still possible to appreciate the original architectural proportions of the building and in particular the symmetry and architectural rhythm of the fenestration. The building currently has discreet

rooflights to the front roof plane which are repeated on the property to the west and on numerous buildings in terrace.

5. The proposal would see the construction of one dormer to the rear elevation and two further dormers to the front elevation. The front dormers would be of a pitched roof design, set back from the eaves and would not project above the ridge height. They would be clad in slate and finished with white Upvc windows to match the remainder of the property.
6. The Council consider that the rear dormer would be acceptable given that the architectural rhythm of the rear elevation of the terrace has been broken up by various different outriggers and rear extensions and alterations. I have no reason to disagree with this view. Accordingly, I am satisfied that this element of the proposal complies with the design and character and appearance requirements of Policies CS15 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle 2015 (CS) and Policies DM20 and DM23 of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Development and Allocations Plan 2020 (DAP).
7. I saw during my site visit that there are various examples of front dormers along the terrace. Some are of a larger more modern design with flat roofs however, generally, they are relatively light weight, single dormers with pitched roofs and glazed cheeks and are positioned centrally in the roof plane. Overall, this form of design reflects the subservience of the attic floor of the town houses.
8. I consider that the introduction of two dormers to the front would dominate the relatively shallow roof plane resulting in a cluttered appearance that would unbalance the proportions of the host building. This would be further exacerbated by the solid side cheeks which would appear cumbersome and incongruous when compared to the more lightweight traditional dormers within the terrace.
9. Overall, I consider that by virtue of their bulk, positioning, and general appearance the front dormers would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. This would be contrary to the requirements of CS Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle 2015 and Policies DM20 and DM23 of the DAP. These policies require development to, amongst other things respond to local distinctiveness and the character of existing buildings and surrounding areas with respect to design, scale, and materials.

Other Matters

10. I accept that there are existing features in the surrounding area including a metal chimney to the rear of the appeal property and other modern dormers on the terrace which detract from the character and appearance of the area. Nonetheless, each development must be assessed on its own merits and the presence of other less successful interventions does not justify the future development that would harm the character and appearance of the area.
11. Furthermore, I note the appellant's submission in relation to the usable living space in the attic rooms and the assertion that the dormers would create a more lettable space. Whilst I do not doubt that this would be the case, it does not outweigh the harm that I have identified in relation to the main issue.

12. I have had regard to the fact that the appeal property is located within the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site, which, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is a designated heritage asset of the highest significance.
13. The Framework declares that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).
14. The significance of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site is derived from its historical and archaeological interest. Acknowledging the modest form and extent of the proposal I do not consider that the development would result in harm to the significance of the asset. Consequently, the proposal would comply with the provisions of the Framework which seek to protect the significance of designated heritage assets although this in itself would not amount to a consideration in support of the appeal.

Conditions

15. Planning permission is granted subject to the standard three year time limit condition. In the interests of certainty it is necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusion

16. The proposal consists of two elements. The rear dormer is acceptable and complies with relevant planning policies. This development is clearly severable from the remainder of the scheme, as it is physically and functionally independent. Therefore, I shall issue a split decision in this case, and allow the rear dormer.
17. In respect of the two front dormers, I have concluded that this element would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the property and surrounding area, therefore, I dismiss the appeal in respect of the two front dormers.

J Hunter

INSPECTOR