
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 April 2022

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th May 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/22/3294864

193 Edge Hill, Darras Hall, Ponteland NE20 9JN

- 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 Dr & Dr F Kamali against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03387/FUL, dated 19 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2022.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion to include bathroom and two bedrooms. Additional windows to first floor bathroom and bedroom (side elevations).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of the proposal has changed from the application form to the decision notice. That on the application form is not inaccurate, however, I acknowledge that the loft conversion involves the provision of dormer extensions to the front and rear, the installation of rooflights to the front roofslope and the removal of the more centrally located chimney stack.
3. The Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036 (NLP) was adopted on 31 March 2022, in relation to this appeal replacing the Castle Morpeth District Local Plan. I am required to make my decision based on the policy in place at the time of the decision and the parties have provided me with policies from the NLP which they consider relevant to the proposal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the front and rear dormer extensions on the character and appearance of the existing property and area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property occupies a corner plot within a highly residential area. The property is of traditional form and appearance of two storeys with a steeply pitched roof above. Despite its set back within the plot and the presence of boundary planting, the front and rear roof-slopes of the property are visible at various points from Edge Hill and Western Way.
6. The front dormer extensions, although prominent as a result of being set at the same height as the ridgeline on the main dwelling, would be well balanced on the front roofslope. By reason of their limited width and gable design which

would match the roof form on the host dwelling they would represent appropriately designed and sensitive additions to the host property.

7. In sharp contrast, the rear dormer window would obscure almost the entire rear roofslope, extending only a short distance from the gable ends of the dwelling and incorporating a very shallow pitched roof, which would emanate from the main ridgeline, and which as a result of its extremely shallow pitch, would have a similar appearance to a flat roof.
8. It would have a highly boxy and bulky appearance which would contrast with the otherwise well-proportioned existing dwelling and the proposed front dormer extensions.
9. This part of the proposal would therefore detract from the character and appearance of the dwelling. Given that the rear dormer extension would be visible from public vantage points, particularly on Western Way, this part of the proposal would subsequently detract from the character and appearance of the area.
10. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy HOU 9 of the NLP and Policy PNP 2 of the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan (2017). Amongst other things these policies require high quality design and state that householder proposals for the extension and/or external adaption of existing dwellings will only be supported where the enhancement is well related and subordinate in size to the existing dwelling and where they respect, complement, and do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the style and character of the existing dwelling.

Other Matters

11. I am aware that roof extensions and dormer windows of various styles and forms are present on dwellings of varied design locally and these do form part of the character of the area. I was able to view those that had been drawn to my attention within the evidence on my site visit. However, none appeared to replicate the same circumstances as before me within this appeal and I therefore afford these examples limited weight.
12. I also acknowledge that the proposal would have benefits for the occupants in terms of providing improved and additional living accommodation. However, there is nothing to indicate that this could not be achieved in a less harmful manner at the site. I also therefore afford this matter limited weight.
13. Whilst there is suggestion that a similar proposal could be undertaken under permitted development rights, the evidence suggests that any rear dormer extension arising would be smaller if utilising such rights and would therefore be likely to be less harmful. I therefore afford this matter limited weight.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. There is no indication that the decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR