
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2022

by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/22/3298000

9 Crofts Close, Corbridge NE45 5ND

- 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 Mrs L Ward against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 21/04803/FUL, dated 10 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2022.
 - The development proposed is a second storey extension above garage and extension to front to increase garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a second storey extension above garage and extension to front to increase garage at 9 Crofts Close, Corbridge, NE45 5ND, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/04803/FUL, dated 10 December 2021, subject to the following conditions.
 - (i) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - (ii) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Croft-001-Rev E and Croft-004-Rev E.

Procedural Matter

2. Since planning permission was refused, the development plan for the area has changed. The Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036 was adopted on 31 March 2022 (NLP). The main parties have confirmed that the appeal should now be determined against policies HOU9, TRA 2 and TRA 4 of NLP including appendix E (Parking Standards). These policies supersede those listed in the Council's refusal notice. I have determined the appeal on the basis of such policies.

Background and Main Issue

3. The Council raises no objection to the design or proportions of the proposed extensions to the dwelling. I do not disagree with the Council's conclusions in these respects. The Council contend that an increase in the number of bedrooms from three to five requires the provision of additional on-site car parking spaces from one to three and that in the absence of such additional on-site car parking spaces there would be unacceptable on-street car parking

demand pressures to the detriment of the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

4. There is a planning permission¹ in place for a similar extension to the dwelling albeit that the number of bedrooms would be increased from three to four and also including the provision of an office. That planning permission requires the provision and retention of an additional two on-site car parking spaces on the existing front amenity space.
5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings in respect of the availability of on-street car parking spaces.

Reasons

6. Policy HOU 9 of the NLP states that residential developments will be supported where they *'retain reasonable garden/yard space and satisfactory off-road parking space for the dwelling'*. Policy TRA 2 of the NLP states that all developments will be required to *'include appropriate measures to avoid, mitigate and manage any significant impacts on highway capacity, congestion or on highway safety including any contribution to cumulative impacts'*, and policy TRA 4 of the NLP states that *'an appropriate amount of off-street vehicle parking sufficient to serve new development shall be made available in safe, accessible and convenient locations prior to the development, as a whole or in part, being brought into use. Vehicle parking should normally be provided in accordance with the parking standards set out in Appendix E of the Local Plan'*.
7. In this case, it is proposed to retain one car parking space on-site in association with the resultant proposed five bedroom dwelling. Appendix E of the NLP requires *'all development'* to accord with identified car parking requirements. The appeal proposal relates to a house extension and is new development. Consequently, Appendix E stipulates a requirement to provide a minimum of three *'in curtilage'* car parking spaces in association with the appeal proposal. I find that there is therefore direct conflict with the *'normal'* car parking requirements for new development as detailed in policy TRA 4 and Appendix E of the NLP.
8. The appellant claims that car parking on the street would not result in adverse harm being caused to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties as there is ample car parking space within the cul-de-sac, as amenities and facilities are close by thereby limiting the need to use or own a car, and as the proposal is a *'modest'* extension it would be unlikely to mean that car ownership/use would increase. The appellant also suggests that immediate neighbours often choose to park on the road in favour of using driveways in order to better enjoy front garden spaces.
9. In this case, a requirement to provide two additional car parking spaces within the curtilage of the appeal dwelling would result in the loss of associated on-street car parking space. An extended dropped kerb would be required and if vehicles were parked on-site, it would then mean that on-street car parking along this road frontage would not then be possible for

¹ Planning permission 21/01348/FUL dated 18 November 2021

other road users. Such car parking would lead to a blocking in of vehicles. In other words, I do not consider that the provision of two additional on-site car parking spaces would make any material or positive difference to any perceived or existing on-street car parking demand pressures.

10. In addition to the above, I would add that the Council has not actually provided any evidence to demonstrate that there is a lack of on-street car parking capacity in the cul-de-sac for existing residents or visitors. While my site visit was only a snap shot in time, I did nevertheless notice there was some spare on-street car parking capacity within Crofts Close. Furthermore, it is of note that there are no car parking restrictions in the locality. This perhaps suggests that there are no current identified pressures or concerns from the Highway Authority from an on-street car parking point of view.

Conclusion

11. For the above collective reasons, I therefore conclude that there are material planning considerations that justify overriding the '*normal*' car parking requirements as stipulated in Policy TRA 4 and Appendix E of the NLP. There is no reasonable evidence before me to indicate that the proposal would be likely to lead to road safety or environmental problems/harm in the locality and, in this regard, the proposal would not therefore conflict with Policy TRA 4 (d) of the NLP or with Policy TRA 2 of the NLP. Furthermore, the evidence before me leads me to find that there would be satisfactory off-road parking space for the resultant dwelling and hence the proposal would accord with policy HOU 9 of the NLP. Consequently, I conclude that that the appeal should be allowed.

Conditions

12. Planning permission is granted subject to the standard three-year time limit condition. It is also necessary that the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty. I have therefore imposed a condition to this effect. The Council has suggested conditions relating to widening the vehicular access and hard surfacing the car parking area. These conditions are not necessary as the existing car parking area is already hard surfaced and, given my conclusion on the main issue, it is not necessary to provide a widened vehicular access to facilitate increased on-site car parking.

D Hartley

INSPECTOR