



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2023

by H Jones BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/23/3327786

32 Linden Way, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland NE20 9DP

- 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 Ms Kelly Hendry against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00494/FUL, dated 8 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 4 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is Extension to rear and side (South elevation). Raising of ridge height.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered from that on the planning application form. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the description given on the original application.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

4. Linden Way contains a variety of house types but, the host property is one of a number of houses in this part of the street which exhibit some common design features. These houses are quite similarly scaled, are 2 storey, have a dual pitch to the main roof and, are served by a single storey element to their front and/or side. These houses have a predominance of a similarly coloured brick to their elevations together with the incorporation of cladding or tiles as a feature material treatment. Several of these houses also have a quite simple window design with many windows containing large panes of glass.
5. In the proposal, the enlargement of the host property's ground and first floor, together with the introduction of a new second floor of accommodation would considerably increase its overall size, mass and height. The simple dual pitched approach of the existing main roofscape would be altered to one that would include hipped elements and gable projections. The proposed off-white render to the elevations would be very dissimilar to the brick and cladding exhibited by this house type. The Georgian style windows proposed would incorporate a number of glazing bars and mullions. These would be in stark contrast with the

more simplistic style of the existing windows within the host property and, again, several nearby similarly designed houses.

6. In combination, the enlargement and alterations proposed would be uncomplimentary to the existing property and to the nearby similar houses. A harmfully imposing and prominent building within the street scene would be formed. This would be the outcome, even if the frontmost and rearmost parts of the house would remain similar distances from the plot boundaries as is the case now. In coming to this view, I acknowledge that properties in Linden Way have been the subject of extensions and alterations and, that more widely in Darras Hall, the redevelopment of properties may be quite commonplace. Nevertheless, the manner and extent to which the host property would, in the proposal, diverge from its present design and scale and that of the similar houses nearby, would be particularly unsympathetic.
7. For the above reasons the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to Policies HOU 9 and QOP 2 of the Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036. In summary and, amongst other matters, these policies require that development preserves the character of an area, whilst residential extensions should respect the design of the existing house and be subordinate in their size and mass. The proposed development would also be contrary to Policies PNP 2 and PNP 4 of the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan which sets out that development should be of high quality, should make a positive contribution to its surroundings and should remain respectful to the street scenes within Darras Hall. Finally, the proposed development would conflict with advice at paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that development should add to the quality of an overall area and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment.

Other Matters

8. Ponteland Town Council raised no objections to the proposed development whilst the Darras Hall Estate Committee may have granted its approval. A neighbour did object, though I accept, this did not relate to matters of character and appearance. However, limited objection does not in itself render the scheme appropriate nor overcome my concerns. The proposed development may not harm the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers but, this lack of harm is a neutral factor in my determination and does not outweigh the harm I have identified in the main issue.
9. The appellant draws issue with the manner in which the Council handled the planning application. However, this does not have a bearing on the merits of the case and, therefore, is not a determinative factor in my decision.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, having taken account of the development plan as a whole and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

H Jones

INSPECTOR