
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2024

by T Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/24/3340241

Site South of Border View, Norham, Berwick Upon Tweed TD15 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 Mark Straughen against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 23/03761/FUL, dated 6 October 2023, was refused by notice dated 4 December 2023.
 - The development proposed is a detached dwellinghouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed. Planning permission is granted for a detached dwellinghouse at Site South of Border View, Norham, Berwick Upon Tweed TD15 2JZ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 23/03761/FUL dated 6 October 2023 subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Procedural Matters

2. The evidence indicates that two additional plans A108 and A109 have been submitted alongside the appeal. These relate to existing and proposed site levels and a cross section plan. These plans aid the understanding of the proposed scheme and I have therefore taken them into consideration as part of this appeal. I note that amended plans omitting upper floor windows were received by the Council and these are included on the list of approved plans.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and whether the development would provide acceptable pedestrian access and appropriate access for refuse collection.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. The appeal site is set back from the B6470 behind an existing dwelling in between that site and what appears to be a recently built dwelling to the rear. As such, the site is not prominent from public vantage points although can be seen from nearby dwellings. The site is on the western side of Norham.
5. On this side of Norham, as opposed to the main body of the village which has a well established and cohesive design palette, building designs, sizes, ages and

materials are mixed. That mixed appearance extends to the varying types and forms of window openings which are publicly visible.

6. I note that the scheme incorporates a range of window forms and sizes. However, this would cause no harm to the character or appearance of the area bearing in mind the range of property designs close to the appeal site.
7. The proposed dwelling would be larger and set higher than the property adjacent to the road to the front of the site. However, the impact of that difference would be limited given that the proposed dwelling would be set well back, such that the height difference is not likely to be especially notable. By being set slightly into the sloping ground, the levels plan indicates that the ridgeline would be no higher than the property to the rear.
8. The dwelling would appear well balanced with the site in terms of plot coverage and the proposed property would not unacceptably dominate the site or its surroundings. It would be a dwelling of modern design, but such dwellings form part of the established character and appearance of this part of Norham. The dwelling would not therefore harm the character or appearance of the area.
9. The proposal would not therefore conflict with Policies HOU 9, QOP 1 or QOP 2 of the Northumberland Local Plan (2022) (NLP). Amongst other things, these policies seek that such development contributes to a sense of place including with regard to building heights, detailing and form and massing whilst preserving the character of an area.

Access/Refuse

10. The access to the site from the B6470 already serves two existing dwellings. A bin storage area is shown close to the house. It is likely to be the case that bins would be moved, along with those of other properties which the access serves, close to the roadside on collection days. The distance that bins would need to be moved would not be substantial. The arrangements for refuse collection would not therefore be unacceptable.
11. The driveway is served by an existing dropped kerb access from the carriageway and the existing dropped kerb arrangement close to the site on the B6470, which already serves two existing properties would not appear prohibitive to a range of users accessing the footway on the opposing side of the road. The arrangements for pedestrian access would not therefore be unacceptable.
12. There would therefore be no conflict with Policy TRA 1 or TRA 2 of the NLP which amongst other things require that the transport implications of development must be addressed as part of any planning application and that development provides effective and safe access and egress to the existing transport network.

Other Matters

13. The Council do not consider that the proposal would have a significant impact on residential amenity. I have no reason to disagree and the proposal would not have any unacceptable impact on the living conditions of nearby residential occupiers.

14. The evidence indicates that a previous outline permission was for a bungalow design. Whilst that permission may be in place, I have considered this full submission on its own merits and I afford that previous permission limited weight in terms of setting design parameters for this proposal.

Conditions

15. The standard time limit and plans conditions are necessary to define the development. A materials condition is required in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. Condition 4 is required in the interests of the proper drainage of the site whilst a condition requiring the installation of a bat box or bird nest box is necessary in the interests of biodiversity at the site.

Planning balance and Conclusion

16. The proposal would not conflict with the development plan and there are no other considerations which indicate the proposal should be determined otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is allowed.

T Burnham

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Proposed Elevation and Layout Plan, drawing no. A105 (Amended 14th November 2023)
 - Proposed Site Plan, drawing no. A103
 - Proposed Site Plan, drawing no. A104
 - Route to Available Main Drainage, drawing no. A106
 - Site Levels Plan, drawing no. A108
 - Site Cross Section Plan, drawing no. A109
- 3) The facing materials and finishes to be used in the construction of the development shall be in accordance with the details contained in the application. The development shall not be constructed other than with these approved materials.
- 4) The building shall not be occupied until a package treatment plant has been installed with discharge to ground soakaway as shown on the submitted plans.
- 5) To provide an enhancement for biodiversity within the development hereby approved, a minimum of one bat box or bird nest box shall be built-in to the new building following best practice guidance and shall be available for use prior to the first occupation of the dwelling and retained for the lifetime of the development.