

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 September 2024

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P3420/D/24/3346336

8 Winchester Drive, Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 3JH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Shaista Nasreen against the decision of Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00209/FUL.
 - The development proposed is two storey extensions and rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached two storey dwelling of brick and tile construction. It has an attached single storey, flat-roofed garage to the side.
 4. The appeal dwelling is set back from the road behind a carriage driveway and a very low wall with planting rising above to effectively form a tall area of screening. The dwelling has a garden to the rear.
 5. The surrounding area is residential and generally comprises a mix of detached bungalows and two storey dwellings. There are bungalows along the opposite side of Winchester Drive to the appeal dwelling and two storey dwellings along the same side of the road as the appeal dwelling. Local topography is such that dwellings along the same side of Winchester Drive as the appeal property sit considerably lower than those on the opposite side of the road.
 6. Winchester Drive in this location is notable for its grass verges along both sides of the road, street trees, the setting back of dwellings behind very low brick walls, front gardens and/or driveways and for the presence of gaps between dwellings, which themselves tend to be located on spacious plots. Together, these features combine to provide for an attractive green, open and spacious character.
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7. During my site visit, I observed that, whilst many dwellings in the area have been altered and/or extended, such changes tend to appear in keeping with host dwellings and their surroundings.
8. A large two storey extension to the side of the dwelling, along with a rear dormer, providing additional living space in the roof, is proposed. The proposed development would result in a side extension reaching the same height as the existing ridge line. It would also stretch across the majority of the appeal property's plot at two storey height.
9. I find that this would serve to overwhelm the original appearance of the host dwelling, to the point that it would appear unduly bulky. Further, the bulk, scale and height of the proposal would combine to result in the overdeveloped appearance of what is currently a spacious plot.
10. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the proposed side extension leading the dwelling to appear lopsided, whereby the extended side of the dwelling would appear overly large in comparison to the other side of the forward-projecting front gable. This asymmetrical effect would be further exaggerated by the proposed fenestration, whereby windows would appear varied in size and appearance and somewhat "scattered" in respect of their location.
11. In addition to the above, I consider that the proposed dormer windows would add to the bulky appearance of the roof and would appear at odds with the host dwelling and its neighbours, where no such additions exist.
12. Taking all of this into account, I find that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework; to Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (2009) Policy CSP1; and to Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (2003) Policy H18, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Other Matters

13. In support of her case, the appellant refers to other developments within the wider vicinity. However, none of these comprise developments and circumstances so similar to the proposal before me as to provide for direct comparison and in any case, I have found that the proposal would result in harm and this is not something that is mitigated by the presence of other developments elsewhere.
14. I acknowledge the appellant's consideration that the appeal property is small compared to other dwellings along Winchester Drive and that there is potential for the dwelling to be modernised and extended. However, the proposal before me would result in harm and hence the decision below.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR