



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 July 2025

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U2750/D/25/3368378

1 Riverside Close, Otley LS21 2RN

- 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 Mr Stuart Clarke against the decision of North Yorkshire Council.
 - The application Ref is ZC25/00759/FUL
 - The development proposed is demolition of garage. Erection of a single-storey rear extension and two-storey front extension. Alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed front extension on:
 - i) the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area; and
 - ii) the living conditions of the occupants of 14 Riverside Crescent, with particular regard to outlook and sense of enclosure.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within a planned residential estate characterised by a variety of detached houses arranged along curving streets in a predominantly open plan setting. The estate exhibits a mix of house types, with some properties featuring large flat roof garages at the front and others presenting gables to the street, contributing some diversity to the street scene.
4. The proposal includes the demolition of the existing flat roof garage and its replacement with a two-storey front extension. While the extension would not project further towards the street than the existing garage, its overall scale and massing would result in a significant addition to the front of the property. The extension would span a considerable length and introduce a substantial first floor and roof volume, which would be more visually prominent than the existing garage.
5. Although the ridge height would be set down from the main roof and matching materials are proposed, the extension would awkwardly extend beyond the side wall of the main house. This relationship, while present in the existing garage, would be more pronounced due to the increased height and bulk of the proposed extension.

6. The design incorporates a hipped roof intended to reduce the impact on neighbouring properties to the west. However, this roof form does not reflect the existing gable design of the host dwelling or the gable-fronted properties nearby. Where hipped roofs are present, this is typically on secondary structures rather than as a dominant feature of the main house. Furthermore, the proposed gable fenestration, comprising modest single windows at both ground and first floor levels, lacks the proportionality and rhythm seen in other gable-fronted properties, which generally feature paired windows with a more balanced window-to-wall ratio.
7. The cumulative effect of the scale and design choices would result in a highly prominent and dominant addition that fails to integrate sensitively with the host dwelling or the surrounding built environment, notwithstanding the diversity in the street scene. The proposal does not respond appropriately to the guidance set out in the Council's House Extensions and Garages Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2005) (the SPD), which advises that extensions should be well proportioned, respond to the scale and form of the house, and create a satisfactory composition with the dwelling and its setting.
8. I therefore conclude that the front extension would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and its surroundings, contrary to the design requirements of Policies HP3 and HS8 of the Harrogate District Local Plan (2020) (the LP).

Living conditions

9. 14 Riverside Crescent (No 14) lies to the west of the appeal site and has a shallow rear garden. Its rear elevation contains several main and secondary windows serving habitable rooms and bedrooms. At present, the outlook from these windows and the garden is largely open, with the existing single-storey garage and main gable of the appeal property having limited visual impact.
10. The proposed two-storey extension, although positioned approximately 2.05 metres from the boundary and 12.8 metres from the rear elevation of No 14, would introduce a significant vertical mass at the end of the garden. While the appellant highlights that the extension would not breach the 45-degree code and complies with the SPD's minimum separation distances, these numerical standards do not in themselves guarantee that an extension will not be visually intrusive or overbearing.
11. Given the limited depth of No 14's garden and the orientation of the properties, the extension would appear dominant and enclosing when viewed from the rear windows and garden. The increased height and massing, particularly in contrast to the current low-profile garage, would materially reduce the sense of openness currently enjoyed. The hipped roof design would not sufficiently mitigate the overall impact, and the extension would have an overbearing presence and result in an increased sense of enclosure for the neighbouring occupiers.
12. While the planning system does not safeguard private views, the effect on outlook and the perception of overbearing development are legitimate planning concerns. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposal would cause a harmful change to the living conditions of the occupiers of 14 Riverside Crescent. This is contrary to Policy HP4 of the LP, which seeks to protect neighbouring amenity from intrusive and overbearing development.

Other Matters

13. The proposed single-storey rear extension did not form part of the Council's refusal and, according to the planning officer's report, is considered to constitute permitted development. As such, it is not necessary to issue a split decision in this case.
14. The appellant has stated that the design was informed by pre-application advice and has expressed concern over the lack of opportunity to make amendments during the application process. While these concerns are noted, they do not alter or outweigh the identified harm in respect of the proposed two-storey extension.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR