



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 August 2025

by T Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/25/3366332

The Greys Inn, Embleton Main Street, Embleton, Northumberland NE66 3UY

- 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 Chris Walwyn James against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00109/FUL.
 - The development proposed is erection of dormer roof extensions and redeveloped terraced area with kitchen extension beneath to rear of public house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed. Planning permission is granted for erection of dormer roof extensions and redeveloped terraced area with kitchen extension beneath to rear of public house at The Greys Inn, Embleton Main Street, Embleton, Northumberland NE66 3UY in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00109/FUL, subject to the following conditions;
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans hereby approved: Location Plan, 2024 (0-) 002, 2024 (0-) 003 & 2024 (0-) 004.
 - 3) The facing materials and finishes to be used in the construction of the development shall be in accordance with details contained in the application. The development shall not be constructed other than with these approved materials.
 - 4) No development will take place unless in accordance with the recommendations of the Bat Survey Report, Greys Inn Embleton (E3 Ecology, May 2024).

Procedural Matter

2. The Council decision notice identifies conflict with policies 6 and 8 of the Embleton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2020) (NP). However, these policies relate to local green spaces and principal residence housing respectively. I have not identified any conflict with these policies and they are of limited relevance to the proposal. Policies 5 and 7 do however relate to the Embleton Conservation Area and Non-Designated Heritage Assets respectively. I have taken those policies into account.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the dormer roof extensions on the character and appearance of the Embleton Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).

Reasons

4. The form, scale, detailing and materials of the buildings within the Conservation Area are some of the key components of its significance. Although the Conservation Area Appraisal¹ (CACA) states that amongst other things dormers are rare and not a characteristic feature of Embleton's roofs, they do exist in limited numbers. As an example, I noted during my site visit dormer windows present to the front facing roof slopes of properties within the Conservation Area. It is the case though that simple dual pitched roofs form the most common roof design in Embleton.
5. This design is broadly reflected at the Greys Inn, although there is a small flat roof box dormer window to the rear clad in tiles to match the main roof slope. Even accounting for its presence, the Greys Inn makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a building with a form typical to it.
6. The proposed dormer roof extensions would be set well down from the ridgeline and would be positioned in a balanced manner on the roof slope. However, they would be of significant width and would have a horizontal rather than vertical emphasis. This would be at odds with the more typical vertical emphasis of windows common to the host building and the wider Conservation Area.
7. The dormer roof extensions would therefore adversely affect the significance of the Greys Inn and the Conservation Area as they would depart from the typical roof form and arrangement that is most common within the Embleton Conservation Area and because of their width and horizontal emphasis.
8. The proposal would subsequently detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There would therefore be conflict with Policies QOP 1, QOP 2 and ENV 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan (2022) (NLP) and policies 4 and 5 of the NP. Amongst other things these policies require proposals to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and within a Conservation Area seek development which reinforces the local distinctiveness of the Conservation Area, while, wherever possible, better revealing its significance.
9. However, whilst there would be a range of private views towards the rear of the Greys Inn, public views towards the rear roof slope are limited and the dormer windows are not without any positive design features.
10. Taking these factors into account, the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area would be less than substantial and would be at the low end of the spectrum of harm within this category. The Framework² requires that this harm be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
11. The public benefits of the proposal would include the provision of additional and improved space for both customers and a manager. This would in turn support the viability of the enterprise as a resource for local people to use and would be to the benefit of supporting tourism within the area. This is of particular significance given that the CACA notes that the economic future of the village lies partly in tourism. These public benefits outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm.

¹ Embleton Conservation Area Character Appraisal, January 2025, Northumberland County Council.

² National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

12. The building is identified as a non-designated heritage asset within the Conservation Area Appraisal. For the reasons as outlined above, there would be some limited harm to the significance of the Greys Inn. There would therefore be conflict with Policy 7 of the NP which amongst other things requires proposals affecting non designated heritage assets to seek to maintain any contribution the asset makes to local character and distinctiveness.
13. I have taken the harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset into account when coming to my conclusion in line with the requirements of the Framework.

Conditions

14. Conditions 1 and 2 are required to define the development. Condition 3 is required in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. Condition 4 is required in the interests of biodiversity.

Planning Balance

15. There would be some less than substantial harm at the lower end of the spectrum to the significance of the Conservation Area. There would also be some limited harm to the significance of the Greys Inn as a non-designated heritage asset within its own right. There would be conflict with the NLP and NP.
16. I have afforded considerable importance and weight to the harm to the significance of the Conservation Area. Nonetheless, the low level of less than substantial harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Considerations therefore indicate that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

17. The appeal should therefore be allowed.

T Burnham

INSPECTOR