



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2025

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/D/25/3374927

36 Beach Terrace, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland NE64 6XE

- 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 Niall Smith against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/01939/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of rear outbuildings to allow erection of new single storey rear extension to form open plan kitchen/ living and separate utility space. Existing garage doors to rear amended to allow for suitable single storey car garage to rear of garden. Internal remodelling works and attic conversion with front and rear dormers to install master bedroom and ensuite.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it related to the front dormer (that being the dormer seen on the Proposed Front Elevation – East).
2. The appeal is allowed insofar as it related to the demolition of rear outbuildings to allow erection of new single storey rear extension to form open plan kitchen/ living and separate utility space, existing garage doors to rear amended to allow for suitable single storey car garage to rear of garden, internal remodelling works and attic conversion with rear dormer to install master bedroom and ensuite and planning permission is granted for the demolition of rear outbuildings to allow erection of new single storey rear extension to form open plan kitchen/ living and separate utility space, existing garage doors to rear amended to allow for suitable single storey car garage to rear of garden, internal remodelling works and attic conversion with rear dormer (that being the dormer seen on the Proposed Rear Elevation – West) to install master bedroom and ensuite at 36 Beach Terrace, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland NE64 6XE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/01939/FUL, and the plans submitted with it so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted, and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos 25-101-EYD-DR-001 Rev P2, 25-101-EYD-DR-340 Rev P5 and 25-101-EYD-DR-310 Rev P5.
 - 3) The development to which this permission relates shall be carried out in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Council does not raise an objection to the proposed single storey car garage or to the rear dormer. There were no concerns raised either by consultees or by interested persons with respect to those two elements. I find no reason to disagree with the conclusion that the Council reached that each would be acceptable in terms of their own impact. Accordingly, I have not considered either of those parts of the proposal further in my assessment of the appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - With respect to the proposed rear extension, the effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of 35 Beach Terrace with reference to light and outlook; and
 - With respect to the proposed front dormer, the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Rear extension

5. The proposed rear extension would extend considerably in depth from the existing main rear elevation of the host dwelling. However, the adjoining dwelling at 35 Beach Terrace itself has a single storey extension which is immediately adjacent to where the proposed development would take place. The projection of the proposed extension beyond that existing extension would not be excessive. Furthermore, I note that the roof of the proposed rear extension has been designed to minimise the impact that would be had on No 35 in terms of the height and overall massing of the extension. Both of these factors would significantly reduce the impact on the adjoining property that would arise.
6. I conclude for these reasons that there would not be an undue impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 35 with regard to light and outlook. Consequently, the proposal would accord with Policies QOP 2 and HOU 9 of the Northumberland Local Plan 2022 (LP) and Policy N1 of the Newbiggin-by-the-Sea Neighbourhood Plan 2023 (NP), where collectively they aim to protect the living conditions of the occupiers of existing dwellings.

Front dormer

7. The terrace row of which the appeal property is part is prominently located on the sea front of Newbiggin-by-the-Sea and it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. There are no other front dormers on this particular row. The addition of the proposed front dormer would substantially disrupt the simple forms of the roofs along the row. In the absence of other dormers in the immediate locality, it would be an incongruous feature in a prominent position where there is a great amount of public visibility. This would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and to the surrounding area. This harm would not be overcome because the proposed dormer is subordinate in size to the roof plane, because it would be positioned above existing windows or because appropriate materials could be used, including the replacement of the existing roof tiles with slate.

8. My attention has been drawn to two front dormers nearby at 4 and 5 Beach Terrace. The dormer at No 5 includes a balcony and patio doors. However, those dormers are sufficiently far from the appeal property so not to form part of its character and appearance, that of its immediate surroundings or of the particular terrace row in which the appeal property sits. The presence of those dormers, which themselves are not characteristic of their own surroundings, does not justify the harm that would be caused by the appeal proposal.
9. The other front dormer at 4 Bay View is much further away, and there is evidence that the circumstances pertaining to the presence of other existing dormers was quite different in that instance. Whilst there is reference to there being many other dormers elsewhere in Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, these again do not form part of the character and appearance of the specific area where the appeal property is located. I do not concur that the visual impact of rooflights is comparable to the impact of a dormer and the fact that the appeal property is located outside of a conservation area and has no specific historical or architectural significance does not justify the permitting of a visually harmful development.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed front dormer would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. As a result, it would fail to accord with Policies QOP 2 and HOU 9 of the LP and Policy N1 of the LP, where taken together they seek to safeguard character and appearance.

Other Matters

11. The appellant makes reference to the efficient use of housing stock and that their proposals would rationalise and improve the look of the appeal property. Whilst both would be benefits neither are considerations which would outweigh the harm I have found from the proposed front dormer. It is also likely that those benefits could be achieved by alternative means. There was no specific objection from the Parish Council to the proposed dormer, but this does not mean it should be permitted in the face of the harm I have found.

Conclusion on Main Issues

12. I have found the proposed development to be acceptable, with the exception of the front dormer. It is within my powers under s79(1)(b) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to issue a split decision and to allow parts of the proposed scheme and to dismiss other parts of it. The single storey car garage and the rear extensions are proposals severable from one another and the other aspects of the proposed scheme.
13. I am not however entirely certain as to whether the attic conversion could take place at all without the front dormer. Issuing a split appeal decision permitting development that cannot ultimately be implemented because permission for other elements of the proposal directly associated to it has been refused should be avoided as a matter of good practice.
14. But, in this instance, it may be possible, if needed, to amend the internal layout to compensate for the absence of the front dormer. In the interests of pragmatism, leaving this option open is preferable to also refusing the rear dormer because the front dormer is not acceptable. That is therefore the course of action that I shall take.

Conditions

15. Conditions setting out the time period to commence the development, the approved plans and that works shall be carried out in accordance with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) are needed to provide certainty.
16. The plans submitted clearly show the external facing materials proposed to be used. These are acceptable in visual terms, and it is not as a result necessary to impose a condition requiring the matching of materials used on the existing dwelling.
17. The conditions suggested by the Highway Authority require the approval of the car parking area and the implementation of cycle parking. It is not clear why a further approval of the car parking area is required, given that it would be within the proposed garage which is found to be acceptable in highway terms. There is no cycle storage shown on the plans, but there appears to be space for this within the garage. Neither condition is therefore necessary.
18. The Council's Ecologist suggests that a condition should be imposed requiring an updated CEMP. They consider that this should include timing restrictions with regard to noisy works, strict pollution controls for litter, dust and surface water run-off and refuelling on the site. However this would be a requirement disproportionate to a householder development of the scale proposed, which on the basis of what I am allowing would only take place to the rear of the dwelling.
19. I am satisfied that, even without an updated CEMP, there is no credible risk that the Conservation Objectives of the Northumbria Coast SPA/Ramsar site would be undermined as a result of the appeal proposal taking place. The CEMP provided already satisfactorily considers any impact on protected species. I have not therefore imposed this condition.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be allowed in part and dismissed in part.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR