Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2025 by J Reed MPlan

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N1350/D/25/3371839
21 Lanethorpe Road, Darlington DL1 4SG

- 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 J Bertuccelli against the decision of Darlington Borough Council.
- The application Ref is 25/00258/FUL.
- The development proposed is erection of front boundary wall up to 2m high and detached garage/store within the front boundary, extension to the west elevation of the existing garden store and installation of an additional first floor window into existing side elevation of dwelling (part retrospective)

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. At the time of my site visit I saw that development had commenced and that walls had been erected on the site.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site is a two-storey semi-detached property fronting onto Lanethorpe Road. The area is mainly residential with other two storey residential properties adjoining the site; set back from the highway with modest gardens to the front. These gardens are generally free of built form which helps create a sense of openness to the street scene. There is a clear and consistent pattern of development which helps create a pleasant character and appearance.

6. Due to the siting of the outbuilding, forward of the clearly defined existing building line, when combined with its scale, this results in it being viewed as a highly visible, incongruous structure that harmfully protrudes into the street-scene when viewed from the highway and surrounding public realm.

7. I appreciate that the external materials would match the existing property. However, the footprint coupled with its significant height results in a bulky building that would extend considerably above the boundary wall. It would therefore be visually prominent within the street scene, appearing as inconsistent with the established pattern of development, eroding the existing open character and spaciousness of the front amenity areas.

8. The appellant has referenced the presence of a detached garage elsewhere in the local area. However, I have not been provided with full details of this scheme to understand the particular planning background and specific site circumstances that were present at the time it was approved. Consequently, I cannot be certain that this example is sufficiently similar to the appeal scheme, and I therefore give this limited weight. I have considered the proposal on its own individual planning merits. In addition, to my mind, the example which has been referred to serves to demonstrate the harm that can be caused through inappropriately sized and sited outbuildings. It does not justify allowing harmful development.

9. There are no objections to the proposed window, extension to garden building and boundary treatment and I see no reason to disagree with these conclusions. However, for the reasons set out above, the outbuilding would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policy DC1 of the Darlington Local Plan (2022) which amongst other things seeks for detailed design to respond positively to the local context in terms of its scale, form, height and layout.

10. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework which has similar aims.

Other Matters

11. I acknowledge the appellant's reason for siting the building to the front of the property, in order to retain outdoor space to the rear of the property for their children. However, such personal benefits seldom outweigh land use planning matters, and I give them limited weight in the appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Reed

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR