
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/W/25/3374565

Three Horse Shoes, Horton, Blyth NE24 4HF

- 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 Richard Caver against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00145/FUL.
 - The development proposed is 2 storey side extensions, 1 storey front, side and rear extensions and general alterations in connection to planning application 24/02261/COU.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Reasons for refusal 3 and 4 refer to matters relating to the impact on bats and the highway network respectively. Additional information and amended plans have been provided with the appeal and the Council consider that this would overcome both of those reasons. I have therefore not considered either matter in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is located within the open countryside and is prominent due to its positioning and the general openness of the surrounding land. It is not without visual character, but aside from its main front elevation it represents a mishmash of extensions associated with its former use as a public house. This is particularly apparent from Hathery Lane which runs behind. The public house is now closed, and planning permission has been granted to convert the building into a residential use. At the present time, the appeal site is in a general state of disrepair, and as such it detracts from its surroundings. There would be benefit in bringing the site back into use via an appropriate redevelopment scheme.
5. What is proposed would however be a development of a design that would not be sympathetic to either the host building or the surrounding area. The two large glass fronted two storey gables on the front elevation would bear no resemblance to the rest of the front elevation and would be visually dominant features, incorporating an extensive use of glazing. Their massing and the increase in the height of the building would accentuate this impact. There would be two single

storey wings attached to those gables, one of which would project beyond the main front elevation of the building but the other which would not. This would undermine the symmetry of this elevation and would add to the incongruity of what is proposed.

6. The gables would also appear on the rear elevation, alongside a large flat roof dormer in between them. Aside from the individual impact of the gables that I have identified above, the gables and dormer themselves would be discordant with one another and represent a lack of design coordination. What is currently a relatively modest building when viewed from the rear would become one of a considerable scale, massing and of an overall poor design.
7. For these reasons, what is proposed would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building. This harm would extend to the surrounding area given the openness of the surroundings, representing a visually intrusive development in its countryside setting. Whilst I accept that there would be some likely benefits associated with the proposal in terms of visual improvements to the external areas compared to as at present, and that there would be some visual improvement from the rationalisation and rendering of existing elements of the building, these do not justify the overall harm that would be caused.
8. In conclusion, the proposal fails to accord with Policies STP1, HOU 8, HOU 9, QOP 1 and QOP 2 of the Northumberland Local Plan 2022 where collectively they seek to promote high quality design and to safeguard character and appearance.

Other Matters

9. The appellant refers to two fallbacks, one a specific fallback in the form of an alternative scheme¹ that has been approved by the Council and the other a more general fallback position in terms of permitted development rights to add additional storeys to dwellinghouses. However, the alternative scheme is of a much lesser scale and massing and is of an improved design compared to the appeal proposal. I have not been made aware more specifically of what might be achievable under permitted development rights in this instance and the Council disputes what would be possible. In any event, the appeal proposal goes beyond adding additional storeys and it has not been shown that either fallback position would have a similar or worse impact when compared to the appeal proposal. Therefore, I do not weigh this as a consideration in favour of the proposed development.
10. My attention is drawn to the National Planning Policy Framework in a number of regards, including in terms of making more efficient use of a brownfield site and that there would be economic benefits arising from the proposal, albeit because of the scope of works that would take place those would be limited. My attention is also drawn to Policy HOU 5 of the LP which seeks to provide a range of good quality, energy-efficient homes, to the fact that the appeal site is not in a conservation area nor is a listed building or nearby to one, and that there were no objections from the occupiers of nearby properties. However, these considerations do not, individually or collectively, outweigh the harm that I have found.
11. The appellant has provided a personal statement which sets out their own historical association with the appeal site. Whilst I understand their aims and

¹ 25/02633/FUL

aspirations having had regard to that statement, it does not justify the permitting of a development which would result in the level of harm that I have found.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wright

INSPECTOR