



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2011

by **C J Checkley BA(Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21 November 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/N1350/D/11/2162250

10 Riverside Way, Darlington, County Durham, DL1 2BG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Keith Robinson against the decision of Darlington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. 11/00441/FUL, dated 6 July 2011, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2011.
 - The development proposed is fit railings to existing garage top and replace existing double glazed window with double glazed door/window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for insertion of entrance door/windows to first floor bedroom and erection of railings to existing garage roof to form balcony at 10 Riverside Way, Darlington, County Durham, DL1 2BG, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 11/00441/FUL, dated 6 July 2011, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing Plans and Elevations, Proposed Plans and Elevations, both received on 6 July 2011.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the host dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

3. My description of the development above is based on the more comprehensive description within the Council's decision notice.
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4. The appeal site is one of a series of detached two-storey houses on the east side of Riverside which face west towards a large area of open space adjoining the River Skerne. The houses were originally built in the 1970s to a similar design and style, including integral garages with modest front projections with flat roofs. The appeal property appears to be the only house that still retains both its integral garage and its projecting flat roof above. In most cases the garages have been converted into living accommodation and the projecting flat roofs above have been replaced by mono-pitch roofs. The houses also exhibit a variety of replacement window designs. The appeal property is in line with No 12 to the north, but stands well forward of No 14 to the south.
5. The proposal seeks the insertion of an entrance door/windows in place of the first floor window to the bedroom and the erection of railings around the edge of the existing projecting garage roof in order enable its use as a balcony. Although I saw no other examples of properties in the immediate vicinity that have balconies to the front, balconies with railings are not unexpected features on modern dwellings. I consider that the railings would be in scale with the proportions of the property and would not look overly large. Overall, I do not consider that the simple railings shown in the drawings would look unduly prominent, discordant, incongruous, or otherwise significantly detrimental to the appearance or character of the host dwelling.
6. The element of individuality for the host dwelling resulting from the railings would be adequately subsumed within the broader design theme established by the series of modern dwellings with their individual differences. Their mature landscaping would also aid the partial screening and assimilation of the new features of the house into the street scene.
7. Although the balcony would allow elevated views forwards and sideways, No 14 is set well back and as a result its front windows would not be significantly overlooked.
8. I conclude that the simple railings proposed would not cause significant harm to the appearance or character of the host property or the street scene generally. There would be no material conflict with the provisions of Policy H12 (Alterations and Extensions to Existing Dwellings) of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan 1997, which requires that alterations to dwellings should be in keeping with the character, design and external appearance of the property and the street scene.
9. I am requiring that the external materials used should enable the new development to blend with the existing house. Otherwise than as set out in this decision and conditions, it is necessary that the development should be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

C J Checkley

INSPECTOR