



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2013

by **R P Brooks BA (Hons) MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 9 December 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/N1350/D/13/2206881

10 Woodland Terrace, DARLINGTON, DL3 9NU

- 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 & Mrs Loughhead against the decision of Darlington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 13/00452/FUL was refused by notice dated 30 July 2013.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension (in lieu of existing single-storey extension) to form bedroom and en-suite to first floor and kitchen, utility and cloaks to ground floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Planning policy context and main issues

2. A number of local planning policies are relevant. Policy H12 of the Borough of Darlington Local Plan (LP) states that extensions to dwellings will be permitted where they are in keeping with the appearance of the property and the surrounding area; and would maintain adequate daylight to nearby buildings and not appear overbearing. Policies CS2 and CS14 of the Darlington Core Strategy (CS) promote design that safeguards and enhances distinctive local character. The appeal property is within the West End Conservation Area.
3. Bearing in mind the aims of these Policies, the determining issues in the appeal are the impacts of the proposed extension on, firstly, the living conditions of occupants of 2 and 3 Barlow Street, in terms of possible loss of light and outlook; and, secondly, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Reasons

Living conditions

4. Although its main orientation is to Woodlands Terrace, in plan form No.10 is essentially part of a short terrace on Barlow Street in such a way that the rear wall of the proposed extension would face towards the rear elevations of the other three houses in the terrace. Of these other houses, No. 3 has a bedroom window at first floor level, and No.2 has two such windows. The outlook from these windows is already limited, at No. 3 by a first floor extension, and in both cases by a 2-storey extension to the rear of 8 Woodland Terrace. Westwards, the only open outlook is the narrow gap that the proposed extension would occupy.

5. That extension would be upwards of 7m high to the ridge of the roof, around 3.5m higher than the existing building on the site. It would completely block the existing limited westward outlook from the upper windows of 2 and 3 Barlow Street, replacing it with a view of a high blank wall at close quarters which would appear intrusive and overbearing. It would also block a good deal of any sunlight that currently reaches these two properties from the west, even when the sun was quite high in the sky; and, given its closeness to No. 3 I think it likely that it could also reduce daylight there to some extent also. The overall effect of the proposal would be to make the two adjoining properties, and No. 3 in particular, significantly less attractive places in which to live. I conclude on the first main issue that it would unacceptably harm the living conditions of occupants of 2 and 3 Barlow Street, in terms of loss of light and outlook, contrary to the aims of LP Policy H12.

The Conservation Area

6. On Woodland Terrace and nearby Pierremont Crescent the Conservation Area is characterized by dignified and sizeable terraces which have an attractive unified appearance due in part to their consistent roof heights. The lower ridge level of the roof of the proposed extension is arguably an appropriate approach in terms of making it appear subservient in design terms to the main house; and the common eaves level, and doors and windows of similar design and proportion to adjoining properties, would help tie the new building into the street scene. However, on balance I consider that these attributes would be outweighed by the small overall size of the extension which would make it appear recessive in the street scene and out of character with the prevailing scale of the terraces. I conclude on the second main issue that the proposal would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It would thus be at odds with the aims of LP Policy H12 and CS Policies CS2 and CS14.

Other matters and conclusion

7. I have taken account of all the other matters raised, including the planning permission granted in 1993 for a similar extension but with a monopitch roof. I accept that, if built, this would arguably have had a greater adverse impact on neighbours than the pitched roof proposal which is the subject of this appeal but I must consider that proposal on its own merits and against the background of current local planning policies. Neither this, nor any other matter raised, causes me to change my overall conclusion, on the basis of the two main issues, that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Brooks

INSPECTOR