



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2008

by **Malcolm Rivett BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

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

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Decision date:
22 April 2008

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/08/2060883

Warren Lodge, Wynyard Road, Wolviston, Billingham, TS22 5NE

- 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 Neil Richardson against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 07/2632/FUL, dated 10 September 2007, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2007.
- The development proposed is two storey side extension and conversion of existing conservatory into a tiled roof garden room.

Decision

1. I allow the appeal, and grant planning permission for two storey side extension and conversion of existing conservatory into a tiled roof garden room at Warren Lodge, Wynyard Road, Wolviston, Billingham, TS22 5NE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 07/2632/FUL, dated 10 September 2007, and drawing nos 1-6 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 extension hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main issue

2. The main issue of this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding landscape.

Reasons

3. Warren Lodge is situated within the open countryside. Located on a slight bend in Wynyard Road the property is prominent when travelling along the road from the east, although is largely obscured by vegetation when travelling from the west. There are open fields to the rear of the property and it appears to me that public views of the rear of the dwelling are only long distance ones.
4. The existing single storey east wing of the property, which has a large, unrelieved, front elevation/roof, is prominent when viewed from Wynyard Road from the east. Although the proposal would extend the width and height of this part of the house the introduction of dormer windows, matching those existing on the central part of the house, would, in my judgement, add interest to and

enhance this wing, whilst not significantly increasing the apparent size of the dwelling as a whole. Although apparent from the rear of the property, the increased depth of the east wing would not be readily visible from the road or other public vantage points and the first floor rear dormer windows would be effective in integrating the rear of the extension with the existing dwelling.

5. Whilst the proposal would significantly increase the floorspace of the dwelling its footprint would be increased to a much lesser extent and the dormer windowed first floor and the undeveloped inset in the building near the main door would reduce the sense of bulk of the property. Although it is not prominent in public views the tiling of the currently glazed roof of the conservatory would knit this part of the property more successfully with the rest of the dwelling than at present, improving the overall appearance of the house.
6. I conclude therefore that the proposal would not significantly alter or harm the character or appearance of the property or that of the surrounding area. Policy GP1 of the adopted Stockton on Tees Local Plan indicates that new development should be assessed in relation to its external appearance and relationship with the surrounding area. I have applied this policy and identified that no material harm would be caused. I also find that the proposal has no conflict with policy HO12 of the Local Plan which states that extensions to dwellings should be in keeping with the property.
7. Although not listed as a reason for refusal the Council has referred to the need to control the size of dwellings available in the countryside. However, I have been provided with no evidence of an identified need for smaller properties in the area, or of an adopted policy concerning this issue. Nor has the Council identified any local or national policies which indicate that extensions to dwellings such as the appeal property should be restricted to that which is needed to meet modern standards. These arguments have therefore carried little weight in my decision. The Council notes that the proposal is strictly contrary to policy EN13 of the Local Plan, which restricts most forms of new development outside development limits. Nevertheless, I have no reason to disagree with its stance that the extension of a dwelling in such an area is generally acceptable as long as it is in keeping with the character/appearance of the property and area. I am also satisfied that the proposal has no conflict with Planning Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.
8. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be allowed. I have granted permission in accordance with the approved plans and it is therefore not necessary to condition this matter. I also consider that controls over landscaping are not needed. A condition regarding materials is necessary although it is appropriate for these to match the existing building rather than require the approval of samples.

Malcolm Rivett

INSPECTOR