



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2010

by **Wenda Fabian** BA Dip Arch RIBA IHBC

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

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Decision date:  
22 July 2010

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### Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/D/10/2130419

#### Zarina House, Coatham Stob, Elton, Stockton-on-Tees TS21 1AJ

- 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 Altaf Rahman against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 10/0907/FUL, dated 13 April 2010, was refused by notice dated 4 June 2010.
- The development proposed is single storey side and front extensions, complete with carport and glazed roof canopy.

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#### Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal insofar as it relates to the single storey front extension. I allow the appeal insofar as it relates to the single storey side extension and I grant planning permission for a single storey side extension at Zarina House, Coatham Stob, Elton, Stockton-on-Tees TS21 1AJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 10/0907/FUL, dated 13 April 2010, and 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.
  - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, in so far as relevant to only that part of the development hereby permitted: dwg nos 4 of 6, 5 of 6 and 6 of 6.

#### Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding area.

#### Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is part of an E-shaped range of farm buildings, all now converted to several dwellings. Built of random stone with soft red brick quoins and window dressings and a clay pantile roof, this attractive rural building has been sensitively converted. It retains its essentially agricultural character, albeit that the trappings of domestic occupation are clearly evident.
  4. The proposed 'side' extension would extend the length of this rearward projecting wing at the same width, height and with the same roof form and
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stone water table eaves detail, such that, were it carefully built of matching stone and brick dressings, it would be difficult to distinguish from the existing building. The Council has previously approved an extension in a similar location and they raise no objection in respect of this proposal. I see no reason to disagree with the Council's assessment and conclude that it would not harm the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area, in compliance with policy HO12 of the *Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan, 1997, (LP)* which requires domestic extensions to be in keeping with the property and the street scene in terms of style, proportion and materials.

5. Turning to the proposed 'front' extension; this would be constructed over the main door to the dwelling as a deep portico type feature. It would abut the building at right angles, at the same ridge and eaves height, but the roof would have a wider span and a more shallow pitch. Although the accommodation within the extension would have a small footprint, it would appear much larger; the main hipped roof would project over an open carport area supported on brick piers and projecting along each side would be low pitched glazed canopies supported on slender posts. Each of these features is untypical of the traditional agricultural appearance that has been retained by the conversion. The varying roof pitches and glazed roofs combined with the differing proportions of posts and columns as well as the wide expanse of fully openable glazing proposed would produce a visual discord that I consider would fail to harmonise with the simple lines of the existing buildings.
6. There is a large detached double garage set apart from but parallel to the dwelling, and the proposed front extension would project to almost close the gap between its rear wall and the main wing, such that adjacent corners would be close together. This would draw the eye and result in a larger building mass to one side of this wing that would alter the balance of the whole building group. In terms of its style and proportions it would fail to accord with LP policy HO12.
7. In addition, the proposed 'front' extension would obscure the long simple side wing of the original range, which is clearly seen from the lane over the low entrance walls and double timber field gates, despite the high hedge further along. I appreciate that this is a private road, nevertheless there are numerous dwellings accessed along it beyond the appeal dwelling, such that it would be seen by a significant number of residents and visitors.
8. The appellant wishes to improve his home to meet his family's needs, but this should not be achieved at the expense of the wider environment.
9. Policy CS3 of the *Stockton-on-Tees Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document, 2010*, seeks, at requirement 8, to safeguard the diverse cultural heritage of the Borough. This follows one of the key principles of the government's *Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*; that all development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness. Whilst policy CS3 accepts contemporary design solutions where appropriate, in my assessment the proposed design of the front extension would be at odds with the rest of the development. *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development* states that design that is inappropriate in its context should not

be accepted. In this case the proposal would not be appropriate in the context of these former agricultural buildings in open countryside now converted to residential use.

10. The provision of screening through further landscaping as suggested would not reduce the intrinsic visual harm to the original building that would result from the proposal. I note that in one of the other appeal decisions drawn to my attention, the inspector found that the proposal would *knit... [a previous extension]... more successfully with the rest of the dwelling* and other alterations would *not significantly increase the apparent size of the dwelling as a whole*. The other case involved the building of two linking walls; neither proposal is directly comparable to this case, which I have determined on its own individual planning merits.
11. I conclude that the front extension would harm the character and appearance of the building and the surrounding area, contrary to local and national policies.
12. Overall I have found the proposed front extension harmful but the proposed side extension acceptable. As the two are not connected and could be separated I shall allow one and refuse the other. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed in part and dismissed in part.
13. No conditions other than the standard one in respect of matching materials have been suggested. I consider the standard condition in relation to commencement is also necessary. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning a condition specifying the approved drawings is necessary.

*Wenda Fabian*

Inspector