
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2013

by Helen Heward BSc (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 December 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/D/13/2207399

Whitton Moor Lodge, Whitton Lane, Stillington, Stockton-On-Tees TS21 3JA

- 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 Mrs Linda Phillipson against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 13/2075/FUL was refused by notice dated 27 September 2013.
 - The development proposed is described as "First floor extension above porch and flat roof/balcony. Amendments to the previous planning approval 12/1563/Preapp. These proposed works would only involve a height increase above porch of approximately 2 metres; no change to area, ground level or roof shape".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension upon the character and appearance of the main dwelling and the locality.

Reasons

3. Whitton Moor Lodge is part of an isolated small group of rural buildings in the countryside. Although not the principal farmhouse for the farm, Whitton Moor Lodge was built to house a member of the farmer's family and visually forms part of a farm building group. Whitton Moor Lodge is set back from the road and boundary hedgerows partially screen the property, although it is seen in some views.
4. Whitton Moor Lodge appears to have been much altered and extended. It has a long, plain front elevation with a rendered finish and the roof above is clad with concrete tiles. The windows are white plastic framed windows with a horizontal emphasis and modern design, including two bay windows.
5. Planning permission has been granted for, and building works commenced upon, an extension to the front elevation comprising a two storey gabled bay, a single storey lean to extension and a gabled porch. The main differences between the appeal proposal and the approved front extension are that the appeal proposal would add an additional first floor gabled detail above the porch, and between the two gables, the single storey element would have a balcony, instead of a lean to roof.

6. The first floor element above the porch would be built with brick, tile and window details to match the character and appearance of the approved extension. It would have a gabled roof over and it would be slightly smaller than the other gable. The first floor balcony set between the two gables would have two piers and railings.
7. This proposal continues the theme of the previous scheme and is on the same footprint. It is also smaller than the front elevation, set in from the sides and has a lower roof line. Therefore, the original front elevation of the house would still be recognisable. However, the previous permission retained the horizontal emphasis of the original house by keeping a reduced but still extensive length of unbroken eaves, and by providing continuous horizontal bands of windows of consistently proportioned casements.
8. By contrast the new proposal would interrupt the long eaves line, the narrower width of the gable would be more vertically proportioned and the bands of fenestration would be less horizontally proportioned, at odds with the horizontality of the original house. In combination the overall effect would be to create an extension at odds with the traditional appearance of the front elevation of houses in the countryside. As such it would be out of character with and detrimental to the appearance of this farm related house, the group of rural buildings it is associated with, and the rural locality more generally.
9. Therefore the proposal fails Policy HO12 of the Stockton on Tees Local Plan 1997, which seeks to ensure that extensions are in keeping with the property and street scene in terms of style, proportions and materials. The proposal is also contrary to advice at Paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) that it is desirable that new development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
10. I have had regard to other developments and extensions referred to, and whilst they demonstrate changes that have occurred, none are directly comparable to the specific details of the appeal proposal. Therefore, I have considered this appeal on its own merits.
11. The appellant wishes to improve their home for all of its residents. Advice in the Framework seeks to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives. However, in this case, the harm to the character and appearance of the main dwelling and locality outweighs the benefits for the residents. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

Helen Heward

INSPECTOR