Allerdale Borough Council
Planning Application 2/2015/0493

Proposed Development: Proposed first floor extension

Location: 12 Thirlmere Avenue
Cockermouth

Recommendation: APPROVE

Summary/Key Issues

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Site

The application site comprises a two storey semi-detached dwelling of painted render finish, under a slate roof, situated within a residential area of Cockermouth. The existing property has a nearly full width ground floor extension to the rear. The site lies on sloping ground running down towards the eastern rear garden boundary. Off street parking is provided by means of a detached garage located to the rear of the back garden with a driveway running alongside the dwelling.

Proposal

The proposal involves the erection of a first floor extension to provide additional accommodation. The first floor extension would be situated to the rear of the dwelling, on the footprint of the single storey rear extension.

A previous application at the site (2/2014/0791) was refused in part as the proposed first floor extension was considered poorly related to the existing dwelling due to the raised ridge above the ridge line of the existing dwelling. It was also determined that the proposal would have an overbearing impact on the neighbouring dwelling which would give rise to overshadowing and loss of light to this adjoining dwelling.

A second application (2/2015/0150) amended the proposal by reducing the ridge line of the proposed extension so that it sat lower than the ridge line of the existing dwelling. All
other aspects of the proposal remained unchanged in that the first floor extension would be sited on the footprint of the existing single storey rear extension, set in 200mm from the shared side boundary with the adjoining property at 14 Thirlmere Avenue. The extension would project 3.375m from the rear elevation of the dwelling, have a width of 6.6m, eaves height to match that of the existing dwelling and overall height of 6.55m. The extension would be finished with wet dash painted white walls, welsh grey roof slates and white PVC windows. Although the issue relating to the ridge line of the proposed extension was resolved in this application, the issue relating to the impact upon the neighbouring dwelling was not been addressed within the proposal therefore, this reason for refusal was still applied to the application.

The current proposal is a replica of that submitted under 2/2015/0150.

Relevant Policies

National Planning Policy Framework
Chapter 7 - Requiring good design

Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1) July 2014
Policy DM15 - Extensions and alterations to existing buildings and properties
Policy S32 - Safeguarding amenity
Policy S4 - Design principles

Relevant Planning History

2/2014/0791 – Proposed first floor extension at 12 Thirlmere Avenue, Cockermouth – Refused 8/12/14

2/2015/0150 – Proposed first floor extension to provide additional accommodation and alterations to roof pitch at 12 Thirlmere Avenue, Cockermouth – Refused 6/05/15

Representations

Town Council – No objections
Highways – No objections

The application has been advertised on site and neighbouring properties have been notified. No resulting representations have been received to date.

Assessment

Scale and Design

There is adequate space within the plot to accommodate an extension of this scale given that the first floor extension would be sited on the footprint of the existing ground floor extension. The extension has been designed with materials and form matching that of the existing dwelling.
Amenity

The previous applications were refused on the grounds that the first floor extension would be situated directly adjacent to the shared boundary with 14 Thirlmere Avenue and would therefore have an adverse impact on the amenity of these occupiers due to its height and massing. No alterations have been made to the proposal to alleviate these concerns.

In the absence of any amendments to the former plans, Officers consider that the proposal is of such a height and massing in close proximity with the neighbouring dwelling that, if allowed, the proposal would result in an increased sense of enclosure as a result of overbearing development and a loss of sunlight/daylight as a result of overshadowing to the neighbouring dwelling at 14 Thirlmere Avenue. This is particularly relevant to those ground and first floor windows closest to the boundary and serving the living accommodation available within the neighbouring dwelling, where the impact of this loss of amenity would be greater.

Policies S32 and DM15 of the Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1) July 2014 indicate proposals will not be supported where they would have an unacceptable effect on residential amenity and where a proposal would result in harm to the amenity of occupants of neighbouring or adjacent properties. As the proposal has not been amended to alleviate concerns relating to the loss of neighbouring amenity, the proposal is still considered to be contrary to current planning policy in terms of safeguarding amenity.

Highways

The proposal would not affect existing highways conditions. No objections have been received from the Highways Department.

Local Financial Considerations

Having regard to S70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act the proposal would not result in any local financial benefits.

Conclusion

The proposal is the third application at the site. The previous applications were refused on the grounds that the proposed ridge line would project above the existing ridge line to the visual detriment of the area and street scene (2/2014/0791), and also due to the loss of residential amenity to the neighbouring dwelling at 14 Thirlmere Avenue (2/2014/0791) and (2/2015/0150).

The current proposal has been amended to reduce the ridge line and thus concerns relating to the visual impact of the development from the highway. The issues relating to the loss of amenity to the neighbouring dwelling have not been tackled and thus remain.

The proposal is considered contrary to Chapter 7 and Paragraph 17 of the National planning Policy Framework and Policies S4, S32 and DM15 of the Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1) July 2014. The application is recommended for refusal.
Annex 1

Reasons for Refusal

The proposed rear extension, by reason of height, length and proximity to the shared boundary with 14 Thirlmere Avenue, would have an unacceptable effect on the residential amenity of the occupiers of the adjoining property at 14 Thirlmere Avenue. These occupiers would experience an inappropriate sense of overbearing and enclosure as well as a loss of natural daylight available to the habitable rooms running adjacent to the shared boundary, contrary to Chapter 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies DM15, S4 and S32 of the Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1) July 2014.

Proactive Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying planning policies, constraints, stakeholder representations and matters of concern with the proposal and discussing those with the Applicant. However, the issues are so fundamental to the proposal that it has not been possible to negotiate a satisfactory way forward and due to the harm which has been clearly identified within the reason(s) for the refusal, approval has not been possible.