



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2008

by **John L Gray** DipArch MSc Registered
Architect

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

The Planning Inspectorate
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Decision date:
8 July 2008

Appeal Ref. APP/H0738/A/08/2069901

Former Thornton Autoparts site, Thornaby Road, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6LA

- 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 S Camidge against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application, ref. 07/3408/FUL, dated 6 December 2007, was refused by notice dated 6 February 2008.
- The development proposed is an extension to provide three additional flats.

Decision: I dismiss the appeal.

Reasons

1. Redevelopment of the site with a three-storey, L-shaped building to provide 17 flats was not very far from complete when I made my site inspection. What is proposed is an extension at its western end to provide three further flats.
 2. The first reason for refusal is that the scale and massing of the proposal would be intrusive in the landscape and would leave no opportunity for high quality landscaping within the site. I cannot wholly agree with that. Architecturally, the proposed extension would look like an integral part of the overall design. It would clearly be within the original, previously-developed site. The Council says that the appeal site is part of a defined green wedge but, given what has already been approved, it is difficult to see the weight to be afforded to that – or, indeed, how what is proposed would significantly erode what visually constitutes the existing green wedge. It is true that the existing green space penetrates closer to Thornaby Road to the rear of the appeal site than immediately to the north or south – but the proposal would not change that.
 3. On the other hand, it is certainly true that the appeal scheme would leave no real opportunity for landscaping within the appeal site. That part of it not built upon would have to be almost entirely paved to provide for parking and access to the flats. The effect would be a stark contrast between the site and the green wedge to the west, and also with the residential development adjoining to the north. I consider that would run contrary to what is sought by Local Plan Policies GP1, criteria (i.) and (v.), and HO11, criterion(i.) – but not policy E14, because circumstances persuade me that the appeal site cannot properly be said to be part of the green wedge.
 4. The second reason for refusal is that development would be cramped, leading to a loss of amenity space within the site. There would be virtually no land
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within the site that could be used as amenity space, formally or informally, by the residents of the flats. Apart from the frontage to Thornaby Road, the only useful area that would not be hard-surfaced would be around 50sqm only, close to the north of the proposed extension. I consider that wholly inadequate for a development of twenty flats – and contrary to what is sought by Local Plan Policy HO11, criteria (ii.) and (iii.). Nor, in my opinion, can this conclusion be outweighed by the proximity of the open land immediately to the west.

John L Gray

Inspector