













Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 March 2007

by Malcolm Rivett BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Date: 4 April 2007

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/06/2032962 Rear 83-85 High Street, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 1AE

- 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 B Dunn against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 06/1348/FUL, dated 2 May 2006, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2006.
- The development proposed is new build of 8 flats with associated parking provision on land to rear
 of High Street.

Procedural Matter

1. Since the appeal was made the appellant has submitted an archaeological evaluation of the site which the Council has stated has addressed its second reason for refusal. I have no reason to disagree with the Council's position on this issue.

Decision

2. I allow the appeal, and grant planning permission for new build of 8 flats with associated parking provision on land to rear of High Street at Rear 83-85 High Street, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 1AE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 06/1348/FUL, dated 2 May 2006, and drawing nos 134W.0305.001, 134W.0305.006, 134W.0305.007, 134W.0305.008, 134W.009, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Norton Conservation Area (CA) and on highway safety, with particular regard to the loss of off-street parking provision.

Reasons

4. Norton CA is primarily characterised by its wide High Street and large village green with a mix of commercial and residential property. The buildings are mostly traditional although there are a number of more modern properties, including the small housing development immediately to the north of the appeal site. The appeal site is currently a car park, with a raised landscaped area, situated to the rear of a library. The site is unkempt, with evidence of vandalism (fire damaged rubbish bins) and graffiti, and in my view it detracts from the character and appearance of the CA.

- 5. The 2/3 storey proposal is of a similar scale and massing as other buildings in the CA. Whilst of a modern design it incorporates a number of traditional architectural elements, including window bays and gables, and would, in my opinion, help to "knit together" the traditional and more modern buildings in the area. Given this, and the current appearance of the site, I consider that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the CA.
- 6. The proposal would result in the loss of around two-thirds of the public parking spaces in the car park, leaving 10 available for public use. The surveys undertaken by the appellant show a maximum of 1 car using the car park at any time and on my mid-morning weekday visit no vehicles were parked, other than the Council officer's car. Whilst parking space on the High Street appears to be well used, to my mind the somewhat hidden location of the appeal site car park and its circuitous pedestrian access to the High Street makes its use unattractive. I am therefore satisfied that the 10 remaining public parking spaces would more than adequately cater for the demand to use the car park and that the proposal would not result in the displacement of parking to the surrounding streets. Consequently, I consider it unlikely that the proposal would have a harmful effect on highway safety and thus find no conflict with policies GP1, HO3 and HO11 of the adopted Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan. These policies require that new development provides satisfactory access, parking and servicing arrangements.
- 7. I have given careful consideration to the views of nearby residents. However, given the distance between the proposal and the neighbouring dwellings, I am satisfied that there would not be the potential for significant overlooking or loss of privacy. Having regard to the size of the proposal, I do not consider that the comings and goings of its occupants would cause any significant disturbance to the surrounding residents.
- 8. To ensure a satisfactory form of development, and to protect the living conditions of nearby residents, I agree that conditions along the lines of those suggested by the Council are necessary in respect of external materials, boundary treatments, sound insulation, hours of construction, drainage, landscaping and a contaminated land study. To ensure that the details of landscaping and boundary treatments are not fettered by construction which has already occurred, I consider that it is necessary to require submission/approval of these elements of the scheme before development takes place, rather than prior to occupation of the building as suggested by the appellant.
- 9. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed. I have granted permission for the proposal in accordance with the relevant drawings and therefore I do not consider the first condition suggested by the Council to be necessary.

Malcolm Rivett

INSPECTOR

Schedule

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
- Notwithstanding any details shown on the approved plans, no development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- No development shall take place until there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority a plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment to be erected. The boundary treatments shall be completed, in accordance with the approved details, prior to the occupation of any part of the development.
- 4) No development shall take place until there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority details of sound insulation to ensure adequate protection is afforded against the transmission of noise between living accommodation and bedrooms in adjacent flats. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- No development shall take place until there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority a desk study report providing information on the site's previous land uses and an evaluation as to whether land contamination is likely to be present. If the desk study report identifies that land contamination is likely to be present, no development shall take place until there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority a site investigation report, including risk assessment report and full details of the proposed method of removal/treatment of the contamination. All works referred to in the approved report shall be carried out by, or under the direct supervision of, a qualified environmental consultant prior to the occupation of any part of the development.
- 6) No development shall take place until details of drainage works have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include proposed finished levels or contours; car parking layouts; other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas; hard surfacing materials; a detailed planting plan (including soil depths; plant species, numbers and sizes; planting methods; maintenance and management); minor artefacts and structures (eg. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting etc); proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (eg. drainage power, communications cables, pipelines etc. indicating lines, manholes, supports etc.); retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration, where relevant.
- 8) All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part

of the development or in accordance with a programme agreed with the local planning authority.

9) No construction activity of the development hereby approved shall take place outside the following hours:

Monday to Friday 0800 - 1800

Saturday

0800 - 1300.