



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2009

by **D R Cullingford BA MPhil MRTPI**

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

The Planning Inspectorate
4/11 Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

☎ 0117 372 6372
email: enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk

Decision date:
7 July 2009

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/09/2099235 4 Humber Grove, Billingham, TS22 5EE

- 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 by Mr Ian Pearey against the decision of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application (ref: 08/3007/FUL and dated 2 October 2008) was refused by notice dated 19 January 2009.
- The development is described as 'alterations and extension to bungalow to form 2-storey dwelling house'.

Decision

1. For the reasons given below, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I dismiss the appeal.

Reasons

2. The appeal property lies in a cul-de-sac of neat bungalows amongst the suburban estates on the periphery of Billingham. The proposal would involve extensions to the front, side and rear, the latter including a single storey bay window and sun lounge. But the main 2-storey element proposed would transform the modest front gable into a wide 'cat-slide' roof raised to about 8.7m at the ridge (I estimate by roughly 50%); it would accommodate 4 bedrooms (2 with en suite facilities), a bathroom and a landing.
3. The careful analysis undertaken by the planning officer indicates that although 2 new dormer windows would face the rear elevation of the dwellings in Wolviston Mill Lane, they would be distant enough to exceed the minimum separation distances normally sought and thus prevent any serious impact on the privacy of those nearby. The new windows in other elevations would either be more distant or serve only non-habitable rooms. I saw for myself that intervening foliage and thick hedging about 2.5m high would help to maintain a reasonable degree of privacy for all concerned. Such circumstances, together with the orientation and layout of the neighbouring dwellings, would also satisfactorily ameliorate any potential overshadowing or overbearing impact of the enlarged dwelling. Hence, the one remaining concern expressed by the Council is that the size and design of the scheme would appear disproportionate to the dwelling and impair the street scene, thereby contravening 'saved' policies GP1 and HO12 of the Local Plan. That is the issue on which this appeal turns.

4. Although a dormer bungalow and a 2-story dwelling stand at the entrance to this cul-de-sac, it seems to me that they are seen with the variety of dwellings lining the estate road at Wolviston Mill Lane. All the dwellings wholly within the confines of Humber Grove retain the dimensions of bungalows, although one benefits from a rear dormer extension. And, all those dwellings are epitomised by fairly simple symmetrical designs. The scheme would be quite different. In such surroundings the wide 'cat-slide' roof would create an incongruous asymmetrical gable fronting the street, the size and scale of which would not only look oddly out of place amongst the modest and simple symmetrical elevations nearby, but also swamp what would remain of the existing bungalow. In addition, the height of the new 2-storey roof would rise significantly above the nearby bungalows and its looming presence would be all the more evident by the length of the structure and by the expanse of the 'cat-slide' elevation. For those reasons, I agree with the Council that the size and design of this scheme would appear out of proportion with the existing dwelling and incongruous amongst the bungalows in this cul-de-sac. It would thus impair the street scene and contravene, in particular, policy HO12 of the Local Plan.
5. I have considered all the other matters raised. I realise that a variety of size and style of dwelling exists on the estate as a whole, including 2-storey buildings. But it seems to me that this variety generally relates to different patterns of development. The enclave formed by Humber Grove is relatively homogeneous and is characterised by neat bungalows. I find, therefore, nothing sufficiently compelling to alter my conclusion that this appeal should be dismissed.



INSPECTOR