



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2009

by **Graham Garnham BA BPhil MRTPI**

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

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Decision date:  
17 December 2009

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### Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/09/2109959

### 7-17 Gladstone Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 3EY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Mark Edwards against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 08/3536/OUT, dated 3 December 2008, was refused by notice dated 4 March 2009.
- The development proposed is 'demolition of existing workshop & erection of 10 no. 2 bedroom apartments & associated parking'.

#### Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

#### Procedural Matters

2. The appeal is made in outline, with access, appearance, layout and scale to be considered at this stage. Landscaping is reserved for subsequent approval.
3. I understand that the Council came to its decision having regard to a revised scheme as shown on Drawing No. TM0408/02/A, submitted on 9 February 2009. This drawing, and subsequent file documents, make it clear that the proposal before me is for 2 no. 1 bedroom apartments and 8 no. 2 bedroom apartments, not for 10 no. 2 bedroom apartments as stated on the original application form (as quoted above). I have considered the appeal on this basis.

#### Main issue

4. I consider that this is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

#### Reasons

5. The proposed development would comprise a short terrace that would fill in between existing terraces on the northern side of Gladstone Street. These terraces are of modest scale, 2 storeys in height and with an eaves line just above first floor windows. An older terrace opposite is of a similar scale. The new development would have 3 floors of accommodation. Neither party has supplied details of the height of the existing terrace. From my assessment of the plans and my observations at the site visit, I consider that the new building would be significantly higher than the existing development. At the rear, the contrast would be given added emphasis by the proposed dormer windows – a feature not found on the adjoining housing. At the front, the new building would be in line with the existing terraces, so the difference in scale would be particularly evident.
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6. The top floor would be only partly contained in the roofspace. This results in a large gap between the head of first floor windows and the eaves line. This space, and the vertical shape of the windows below, would add to the inharmonious relationship between the appearance of the new and existing development (which, at the front, has windows with a more horizontal shape). The ground floor detailing at the front would be particularly incongruous. As well as front doors, there would be a mix of open doorways, false windows and a large opening to the parking area. This would contrast with the regular pattern of living room windows and front doors that characterises the existing houses in the street.
7. A new housing scheme to the south of Gladstone Street shows that varying roof and eaves heights can be combined within a single development, but this has uniformity of detailing throughout, including doors and windows. However, the immediate context of the appeal site is different, being between existing buildings. I consider a more appropriate model is given by the infill housing in the terraced streets to the west. Here, modern buildings of 2 storey height reflect the scale and form of the older housing. The proposal uses a traditional form – the terrace – but at an unsuitable scale and with inappropriate elevational treatment in relation to adjoining buildings. Although it would enable some unsightly sheds to be removed, I consider that its design falls short of the high standards now set out for such development in Planning Policy Statement 3, *Housing* [PPS3].
8. The Council is also concerned about the alleged dominance of the car parking area and the lack of private amenity space. I take issue with the means of accessing the parking from a design point of view (paragraph 6 above). However I consider that the provision of off street parking is acceptable in principle and that the use of hard surfacing reflects the predominance of that kind of material in the vicinity. The absence of any outdoor amenity space for the 8 no. 2 bedroom flats would be obvious to incoming occupiers, and I consider that it would not be unacceptable in an apartment building in an inner urban setting.
9. The proposal would have the benefit of making better use of previously developed land in a generally sustainable location and, unlike the existing development, it would include off street parking. However, I consider that these advantages would be more than outweighed by the intrinsic shortcomings I have found with respect to the scale and design of what is being proposed. I conclude that the proposal would be inappropriate in its context and fail to take the opportunities available to improve the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with the relevant provisions of saved policies GP1, HO3 & HO11 in the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan (1997) in this respect, and with the more up to date provisions of PPS3.
10. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*G Garnham*

INSPECTOR

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