
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 October 2014

by Michael R Moffoot DipTP MRTPI DipMgt MCMI

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

Decision date: 1 December 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/14/2222567

The Whitehouse, Whitehouse Road, Billingham TS22 5ER

- 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 Alan Moutrey against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 14/0685/RET, dated 6 March 2014, was refused by notice dated 30 June 2014.
 - The development proposed is a detached storage container.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The disputed steel container is located behind a timber fence within a car park to the side of The Whitehouse public house, which forms part of Wolviston Court, a small local shopping parade. The surrounding area is characterised by residential development including single-storey properties adjacent to the eastern boundary of the car park and close to the container.
4. The upper part of this sizeable structure is visible from Whitehouse Road and from surrounding properties. Its utilitarian appearance and box-like proportions are wholly incompatible with this residential context and, despite the partial screening afforded by the fence, the container severely compromises the street scene. It is also detrimental to the residential amenity of the occupiers of properties in the vicinity of the site, and particularly those living in the adjacent bungalows which have rear gardens and windows to habitable rooms that overlook the structure.
5. The container is used to store furniture and equipment associated with the public house. It has been on the site since early 2011 and a temporary planning permission for its retention lapsed in October 2013. The appellant wishes to retain the structure until 2018 when the lease on the property expires. However, this does not justify a structure that has such a disruptive impact on the visual amenity of the locality.

6. I therefore conclude that the proposed development unacceptably harms the character and appearance of the area, in conflict with policy CS3 of the *Core Strategy Development Plan Document* (2010) which, amongst other things, requires new development to make a positive contribution to the local area by responding positively to existing features of local character. It would also be contrary to objectives in the *National Planning Policy Framework* which seek high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings, and encourages refusal of permission for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

Other Matters

7. Although the planning application was recommended for approval by the Case Officer, it is the decision of the Council that is before me in this case.
8. The storage of vehicles and trailers on the car park and concerns regarding vermin on the land are matters for the Council to deal with. Other matters raised in representations have no bearing on the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

9. Accordingly, for the reasons given, and whilst noting the support of some local residents, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Michael R Moffoot

Inspector