



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2017

by Graeme Robbie BA(Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 8 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/D/17/3173971

47 Thornwood Avenue, Ingleby Barwick TS17 0RS

- 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 & Mrs Simon and Sarah Devlin against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/3075/FUL, dated 24 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is the raising of roof height to accommodate addition of first floor to existing bungalow and attached garage. Installation of dormer window. Installation of bay window to front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the raising of roof height to accommodate addition of first floor to existing bungalow and attached garage. Installation of dormer window. Installation of bay window to front at 47 Thornwood Avenue, Ingleby Barwick TS17 0RS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/3075/FUL, dated 24 November 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: TPS001A and TPS002A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matters

2. The appellant submitted a revised set of drawings during the course of the Council's consideration of the application. The Council have advised that the appellant specifically requested that the planning application be considered on the basis of the original drawings and it is clear to me that that is the basis upon which the Council proceeded.
3. However, the appellant has invited me to consider the content of both sets of plans¹ as part of the appellant's appeal submission. Having considered the content of both sets of plans, I am satisfied that no party would be disadvantaged by my consideration of the appeal on the basis of the revised

¹ Referred to in the appellant's Grounds of Appeal as Plan A (originally submitted plans: TPS001 and TPS002) and Plan B (revised plans: TPS001A and TPS002A)

set of plans. Thus, I accept the revised plans and I have considered the appeal accordingly. I have also adopted the development description set out on the Council's decision notice as I consider that it more accurately describes the proposal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property, and the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is detached bungalow of a somewhat squat appearance located within a residential area characterised by houses of varying appearance, type and scale. No 47 is located on the outside of a sweeping bend in Thornwood Avenue and as a consequence there is no discernible building line or definitive pattern of development that particularly characterises the existing area. Although bounded on both sides by two storey dwellings the existing bungalow has an unobtrusive presence within the Thornwood Avenue streetscene, notwithstanding the relative proximity of the forward projecting, hipped roof, single storey garage element to the roadside.
6. The proposals seek to raise the roof levels of the main element of the existing bungalow and the forward projecting element of the bungalow that currently accommodates a double garage and bedroom. The Council do not raise any objection to that element of the proposal that would raise the roof of the main body of the existing property.
7. Although this would significantly increase the eaves and ridge levels of the resulting dwelling when compared with that of the existing bungalow, as well as replacing the hipped-ended roofs with two storey gables, I see no reason to reach a different conclusion to the Council in this respect. The resulting dwelling would relate well to the two adjacent dwellings, and others in the surrounding area, in terms of overall scale, siting, design and appearance. Thus, I am satisfied that the principle of raising the roof of the main body of the existing element of the appeal property would not cause harm to the overall character or appearance of the surrounding area.
8. I do, however, share the Council's concern regarding the creation of what would have been a substantial gable elevation as part of raising the roof of the forward projecting element. I agree that the additional bulk of this gable elevation, together with the bulk and massing of the raised roofline, would have created a strident, obtrusive and incongruous addition to the property that would fail to reflect the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
9. However, the revisions made to the proposal in the form of the content of the revised Plan B set of drawings would in my view ensure that the raising of this element of the building's roof would ensure that it would sit harmoniously with the scale, form, character and appearance of the altered and extended property. Although the eaves level would be raised, the additional courses of masonry would be limited and would not materially or harmfully increase the bulk or prominence of the end wall of the building. Moreover, by proposing a hipped end to this element of the building it would replicate the roof form that currently exists, ensuring a receding visual presence within the streetscene.

10. As I have set out above, and for the reasons I have given, I agree that the principle of raising the roof of the main body of the appeal dwelling would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the surrounding area. I also conclude that raising the roof of the forward projecting garage element of the building would not, on the basis of the revised plans incorporating a hipped roof, cause harm to the character or appearance of the surrounding area.
11. However, whilst that may be so, I cannot consider a composite version of the two schemes. The original and revised drawings differ slightly in their approach to the main element of the building, the raised roof being slightly lower on the revised plans than the original plans. However, the Council did not object to the original, and therefore slightly higher, ridgeline and I consider both the lower ridgeline and the revised treatment of the forward projecting element on the revised plans to be acceptable.
12. Thus, on the basis of the revised plans submitted by the appellant at both the application and appeal stage, I consider that the proposed alterations would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the immediate streetscene or the surrounding area. I therefore find that there would be no conflict with policy CS3(8) of the Stockton-on-Tees Core Strategy, saved policy HO12 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan or Supplementary Planning Guidance 2: Householder Extensions. In reaching this conclusion, I also find that the proposal would also secure a high standard of design, identified as one of the National Planning Policy Framework's (the Framework) core planning principles.

Other Matters

13. Concern was raised by a nearby resident of 3 Barberry Close, stating that the resulting two storey gable elevation would have a visual impact from the rear of their property. However, the Council concluded that the proposed development would not cause harm to the living conditions of occupiers of the existing properties located on either side of the appeal site. Further, from my observations of the site and its surroundings, any views towards the appeal property from 3 Barberry Close would be over a considerable distance and across the intervening rear garden area of 49 Thornwood Avenue.
14. The proposal would also result in the loss of a bungalow, but I have not been directed to any policies, of a local or national nature, that seek to restrict such things. This is not a material consideration to which I am able to give any significant weight.

Conditions

15. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions in light of the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition to a time limit condition I agree that a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary in the interests of certainty. I agree that a materials condition is also necessary in the interests of character and appearance.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Graeme Robbie

INSPECTOR