



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2018

by **Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC**

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

Decision date: 6 August 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/D/18/3200289

29 Hartburn Avenue, Stockton, Cleveland TS18 4ES

- 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 R Shafiq against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/2113/FUL, dated 4 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 11 January 2018.
 - The development proposed is erection of a two storey extension to the side and rear. Erection of a single storey extension to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the proposal varies between the application form and the subsequent documents. I have used the version given on the decision notice as it describes the proposal more clearly.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site at 29 Hartburn Avenue is one of a pair of semi-detached properties in a predominantly residential area. The proposal would create an extension to the side and rear of the existing dwelling.
5. The Council's document entitled 'Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2 – Householder Extension Guide' (SPG) sets out general principles for the design of extensions, which should complement the main house, for example, by being smaller or set back. A set back by of least a metre can avoid a terracing effect on the street scene.
6. No 29 and its adjoining neighbour at 27 Hartburn Avenue are characterised by a shared hipped roof, central chimney, and central two storey bay windows. The design and proposed materials of the new extension would be broadly in keeping with the appearance of No 29, and the proposed roof form and pitch would mirror those of the existing roof. Also, the large open area at the front of the property would remain. To that extent, the development would reflect the characteristics of the appeal site.

7. However, the extension would rise to match the existing ridge height of the dwelling, and would run in line with its front elevation, with no set back. By matching the dimensions of the main house in this way, the proposal would fail to achieve a sufficient degree of visual subservience to it. Instead, it would add a substantial third element to the existing pair of dwellings, thereby departing significantly from their distinctive original symmetrical design. It would appear unduly bulky and dominant in the street scene. Within the context of the other similarly designed buildings in the vicinity, it would be clear that the proposed extension was not part of the original form of No 29.
8. The gaps between the semi-detached pairs create openness, and the size of the existing plot at No 29 is typical of the spacious suburban layout of the area. By infilling a substantial part of the garden, and bringing the built form significantly closer to 31 Hartburn Avenue, the development would substantially reduce the open character between the buildings. It would appear cramped within site, and would be significantly at odds with the prevailing pattern of development in the vicinity.
9. My attention has been drawn to a variety of existing side extensions in the local area. However, I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to these proposals being accepted, or the policies that were in place when they were considered, and so I cannot be sure that they represent a direct parallel to the appeal proposal. Whilst some of these broadly comply with the SPG recommendations, the less successful designs serve to demonstrate the harmful effect of development that relates poorly to the host building, and the characteristics of the street. In any event, each case is to be determined on its own merits.
10. On my visit, I saw that the appeal site sits at a lower level than No 31, and that the properties on the opposite side of the road are at a sufficient distance that there would be no adverse impact on their living conditions. However, these factors would not mitigate the harm I have identified.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would thus conflict with Policy CS3 of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document, insofar as it requires that new development should make a positive contribution to the local area, and Policy HO 12 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan, which amongst other things, requires extensions to keep in with the property and street scene in terms of proportion. It would also conflict with the design principles given in the SPG.
12. For the reasons above, I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole, and so the appeal is dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR