



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 June 2025

by J Symmons BSc (Hons) CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/W/25/3363051

8 Bankside, Yarm, Stockton-on-Tees TS15 9RH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Darren Crompton against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/0904/OUT.
 - The development proposed is described as 'dividing the area of land to form a new four bedroom house with double garage'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As no agreement has been provided for changing the development description shown on the application form, I have used this with some minor changes for correctness in the above header.
3. The application is an outline application with all matters reserved and as such I have considered the proposed plans for the house as only indicative.
4. In support of the appeal a new revision, revision C, of Drawing 9016/(-9)02 has been submitted. This drawing does not fundamentally change the indicative proposal but shows dimensions between it and existing housing. As the Council and Interested Parties have had the opportunity to comment on the information through the appeal process then, having regard to the Holborn¹ principle, I am satisfied that there would be no risk of prejudice if I take this information into account.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in the determination of the appeal is the proposed development's effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. Bankside is a cul-de-sac which has a fairly straight road alignment and serves housing on both sides of the road. The houses are generally set within large plots and have generous and mostly open frontages, consisting typically of verge, drives and gardens. To the end of the cul-de-sac there is a turning head which has grass and some low planted gardens to its sides and end and there are several larger

¹ Holborn Studios Ltd v The Council of the London Borough of Hackney [2017] EWHC 2823 (Admin)

trees to the garden boundaries. Together, these aspects give the cul-de-sac a wide, open and substantially green street scene and there are reasonably open views across the end gardens, the turning head and boundary trees.

7. The appeal site is the side garden to 8 Bankside (No 8) which is located at the end of the cul-de-sac and bounds one side of the turning head.
8. The proposal would consist of a new dwelling with attached garage. Even though the application is in outline, it is advised that the proposed house has been designed to act as a visual 'end-stop' to the cul-de-sac.
9. While I appreciate the design concept, the positioning of the proposed house to the front of the plot, with no significant open or green frontage, would not be an attractive or positive addition to the cul-de-sac. Unlike the existing mix of house types on the cul-de-sac, the proposed house would be a highly prominent and incongruous addition which would unbalance and significantly harm the existing pleasant street scene and open views.
10. It is advised that the 'end-stop' design concept is generally encouraged in urban design to curtail viewers distant sightlines. However, in this case it is the wide and open views that are an integral part of the attractiveness of the street scene. In this case restricting these would not be appropriate.
11. Due to the outline nature of the application, the proposed layout and house type detailed on the drawings are only indicative and could be changed at the reserved matters stage. However, to maintain the existing character and appearance of the cul-de-sac, in all likelihood a more extensive and greener form of house frontage would be required. This would inevitably result in the proposed house needing to be positioned towards the rear of the appeal site, away from the street which would significantly reduce the space to the rear and side boundaries. As such, even though the appeal site is some 426 square metres (m²) in size, the proposed house would in all probability appear very constrained. As the existing housing and the retained No 8 sit in more spacious plots, ranging from approximately 620m² to 940m², even with the use of similar house styles and materials to the existing housing along the cul-de-sac, the proposed house would appear significantly restricted and different in terms of character and appearance. I am therefore not convinced that an acceptable design could be achieved which would prevent harm to the character and appearance of the area and there is little substantive evidence provided to show otherwise.
12. In conclusion, the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area, and it would be contrary to Policy SD8 of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Local Plan 2019 (Local Plan) and Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). These seek, amongst other matters, to ensure new development is visually attractive and responds positively to the character and sensitivity of the surrounding buildings and landscaping.

Other Matters

13. The appeal site is identified as not being in the Green Belt, is in a low flood risk area and would not affect any environmental, ecological or landscape designations. It is further noted that the proposal would meet nutrient neutrality requirements, not cause overshadowing or loss of natural light to neighbouring properties, not unacceptably affect trees, provide the Council's parking

requirements and design changes could be undertaken to address potential adverse effects from overlooking and loss of privacy. Furthermore, no objections have been raised regarding the proposal by the Council's Highway, Transport and Design Manager and Environmental Health Units, Natural England and Northern Gas. However, while these points are appreciated, they are neutral factors which do not justify or outweigh the significant harm the proposal would have to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. Reference is made that the proposal would meet a variety of the policies and paragraphs set out in the Local Plan and the Framework. It is also contended that the proposal would be consistent with the guidance detailed in the Stockton-on-Tees Supplementary Planning Document 1: Sustainable Design Guide 2011. However, due to the identified harm the proposal would cause, it would not accord to the Local Plan or Framework when these are considered as a whole.
15. Furthermore, given the environmental harm to the character and appearance of the area, the development would not amount to a sustainable form of development as set out in Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Framework. Also, little substantive evidence has been presented to show Policy SD8 of the Local Plan is not relevant or that it is out-of-date and as such there is little reason to suggest Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is engaged.
16. The proposal would result in the creation of one residential house which could be completed reasonably quickly and would provide social and economic benefits through job creation, construction and would add to the range of housing along the cul-de-sac. However, these housing benefits would be small, and the proposal would only modestly boost housing supply. These would therefore only weigh moderately in favour of the proposal. In spite of the benefits, as detailed above, the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area, and this significantly weighs against it. Consequently, the proposal's significant harm would not be outweighed by the moderate benefits.
17. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to the matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Symmons

INSPECTOR