



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2024

by M J Francis BA (Hons) MA MSc MCIfA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/D/24/3348267

9 Heathfield Close, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees TS16 0HA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Tom Samuels against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0932/FUL.
 - The development proposed is double detached garage. Existing attached garage converted into a habitable room and existing flat roof replaced with pitched roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a double detached garage, existing attached garage converted into a habitable room and existing flat roof replaced with pitched roof at 9 Heathfield Close, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees TS16 0HA in accordance with the terms of application Ref 24/0932/FUL, dated 23 May 2024, 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: Site location plan; Drawing 2023/TS/02, 17 August 2023; Drawing 2023/TS/03, 10 January 2024.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing dwellinghouse.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Tom Samuels against Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. That application is the subject of a separate decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Council has not objected to the conversion of the attached garage into a playroom, and the construction of a pitched roof. Therefore, the focus of the appeal is the proposed detached garage.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal site is a modern, two-storey dwelling. It is located in the corner of Heathfield Close, a small cul-de-sac in a residential area of similar style housing. The properties in Heathfield Close are predominately bungalows which are laid out in a regular pattern with flat roofed garages to the side and gardens to the front. The form and scale of these properties' contrasts with several detached houses, including No 9, located at the head of the cul-de-sac.
6. The proposed garage would be in the south-west corner of the garden of No 9. It is currently a grassed area, separated from a parking area at the front of the house by a vertical wooden fence. The garage is intended for the storage of classic cars and domestic vehicles.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document, 'Householder Extensions and alterations', 2021, (SPD) states that a double garage should have minimum internal dimensions of 6 metres x 5.5 metres. In this case the proposal would be 6.4 metres x 6.4 metres, larger, but not excessively so, than the minimum required. The SPD also states that the size and design of a garage must be in proportion with the house, in order that it does not reduce the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties and gardens.
8. The garden in which the proposed garage would be located is large, being more than double the size of other residential plots surrounding it. As the house is sited adjacent to the boundary with No 11 Heathfield Close, there is a wide area of garden along the western side of the site, with a sizeable area to the rear of the house.
9. The proposed garage would be sited in one corner of the garden, away from the front of the host property. Therefore, it would be physically and visually detached from the house and would not intrude into most of the garden to the side and rear. The Council estimates that the footprint would be 67% of the size of the original footprint of the host dwelling. Whilst it would be larger than many domestic garages, in this location and within such an extensive garden, it would not appear overly dominant. In fact, it would not be visible to most properties within the cul-de-sac.
10. The proposal would be built next to the garage of No 7 Heathfield Close, a bungalow. Whilst the Council refers to the minimal difference in height and width between the proposed garage and No 7, the garage would be set back a considerable distance from the front of the bungalow. Therefore, visually it would not compete with No 7.
11. To the rear of the proposed garage would be Nos 64 and 66 Butterfield Drive. These are two storey properties, and so when viewed from the front, the proposal would be seen against a backdrop of taller buildings. Additionally, the roof of the garage would have a similar pitch to Nos 64 and 66, and to No 7, and so would not be unduly prominent or appear discordant in this location.

Moreover, being of brick construction, it would be sympathetic to the building materials and characteristics of the surrounding area.

12. The proposed garage would be different in style and higher than the flat roofed garage at No 7. However, because of its position and the height of surrounding properties, it would not be incongruous or have a harmful effect on the prevailing character of the area.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would not conflict with Policy SD8 of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan, 2019, which requires new development to be designed to the highest possible standard, taking into consideration the context of the surrounding area.

Conditions

14. In imposing the conditions, I have had regard to the tests for planning conditions in paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. In this respect there is a need for the standard implementation condition and a condition listing the plans to which the proposal should accord. To ensure the satisfactory appearance and form of development, a condition ensuring that the materials match the existing house is necessary.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised including the development plan as a whole, the appeal is allowed.

M J Francis

INSPECTOR