
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2017

by David Cross BA (Hons), PGDip, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H0724/D/17/3172862

1 Mill Terrace, Greatham, Hartlepool TS25 2EW

- 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 Mrs Natalie Boddy against the decision of Hartlepool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref H/2016/0544, dated 13 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 16 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single storey extension at the side and rear, alterations to the roof to provide dormer windows to the rear and velux windows to the front to provide room in roof space (resubmitted application).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the dormer windows to the rear. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the erection of a single storey extension to the side and rear and velux windows to the front and planning permission is granted for erection of a single storey extension to the side and rear and velux windows to the front at 1 Mill Terrace, Greatham, Hartlepool TS25 2EW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref H/2016/0544, dated 13 December 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1940/1 Rev A, 1940/2 Rev B, and 1940/3 Rev A.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the Council's decision notice. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed from that stated on the planning application form but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Notwithstanding this, based on the evidence presented to me, the proposal has been amended to include the dormer windows to the rear and additional rooflights to the front. The Council Officer's report confirms that these amended plans were subject to further consultation and publicity. The

description given on the decision notice accurately reflects these amendments and I have therefore used this description within my decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, with due regard to the location of the site in the Greatham Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is one of a pair of semi-detached dwellings located within the Greatham Conservation Area (CA). Although the appeal site is set behind the frontage of the main highway leading through the village, I saw that the rear elevations of the property and its immediate neighbour are visible from circulation and garden areas to the rear of the site as well as from a public footpath along the eastern boundary of the CA.
5. The host property and its immediate neighbour are attractive substantial dwellings. Although the rear elevations of the properties are of an understated appearance and with simpler detailing compared to the front elevations, both properties have a simple uncluttered roofscape which also reflects the dwellings extending along the High Street. In particular, the simple uncluttered roofscape of the appeal site and the surrounding area is representative of the scale and nature of domestic properties within the CA and which contributes to its importance as a designated heritage asset.
6. Within the context of the appeal site, the large central dormer with a rear wall projecting directly from the main rear wall of the dwelling would dominate the roof of the property and would appear as an overdominant and intrusive feature in views from the surrounding area. Although the two subsidiary dormers would be smaller in scale and would be set back from the main rear wall, they would add to the cluttered appearance which would result from the proposal. I note that the Council states that dormer windows are unusual in the CA and this reflects my observations on my site visit. Within this context, the dormers would be an unsympathetic addition in relation to the host property, would unbalance the relatively symmetrical relationship with its immediate neighbour and would be intrusive features within the wider roofscape. The use of pitched roofs for the dormers, rather than flat roofs, would not overcome this harm.
7. I note that the proposed velux windows to the front would be of a conservation design. I have had regard to the comments of the Council's Conservation Officer in respect of the number of rooflights to the front, but I note that this is not referred to in the reason for refusal and that the Council state that the rooflights would be classed as permitted development. The orangery extension to the side and rear would not be readily visible from the surrounding area and would be contained within the rear yard of the property and would not result in harm to character and appearance.

Conclusion

8. Notwithstanding my consideration of the velux windows to the front and the extension to the side and rear, I conclude that the proposed rear dormers, due to their scale, design and location would harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. Furthermore, the proposal would

not preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Whilst the harm to the significance of the CA would be less than substantial, there are no public benefits that would outweigh that harm. The rear dormers would therefore conflict with policy HE1 of the Hartlepool Local Plan 2006 which states, amongst other things, that development within a conservation area will be approved only where it will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. This policy is broadly consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

9. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed insofar as it relates to the rear dormer windows and allowed insofar as it relates to the single storey extension at the side and rear and velux windows to the front.

Conditions

10. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. In order to protect the character and appearance of the area I have also imposed a condition requiring that external materials used in the construction of the extension shall match those of the existing building.

David Cross

INSPECTOR