The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 October 2019

by Diane Cragg DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/D/19/3234368
18 Rook Lane, Norton TS20 1SD

- 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 Miss Lindsey Knight against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 19/0992/FUL, dated 30 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 28 June 2019.
- The development proposed is the construction of a part two storey and part single storey extension to side. (Demolition of existing side elevation porch. Insertion of new windows to front and rear).

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the construction of a part two storey and part single storey extension to side. (Demolition of existing side elevation porch. Insertion of new windows to front and rear) at 18 Rook Lane, Norton TS20 1SD in accordance with the terms of the application, ref 19/0992/FUL dated 30 April 2019 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: drawing no 3 of 4 Rev A 26-6-19 and drawing no 4 of 4 Rev A 26-6-19

   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 description of development provided in the application form has been updated in subsequent documents. I adopt the description of development provided by the appeal form accordingly as it more accurately reflects the proposal before me. In that respect, the appellant and the Council have confirmed that the plans to be considered as part of the appeal are Drawing no 3 of 4 Rev A 26-6-19 and Drawing no 4 of 4 Rev A 26-6-19 which are revised plans upon which the Council made its decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. Rook Lane and Kestrel Close are part of a relatively modern residential area of semi-detached and detached houses of varying design. Properties are set back from the road frontage with low or no front boundary treatment. The entrance to Kestrel Close benefits from wide grassed verges. These verges together with street trees and landscaping to the front gardens provide a spacious and pleasant residential environment that contributes to the area's character and appearance.

5. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached house, on a corner plot at the junction of Rook Lane and Kestrel Close. It has a relatively generous side area due to the alignment of Rook Lane which progressively angles away from the property towards the junction with Osprey Close. Access to the property's double garage, located behind the house, is from Rook Lane. The entrance porch to the appeal property is on the side elevation facing Rook Lane, the front elevation faces Kestrel Close. The attached property 1 Kestrel Close has a porch to the front elevation rather than the side. It also has an additional first floor window on the front elevation. Although the pair of semi's are very similar in their form the difference in the placement and design detail of the windows and the location of the porches affects their symmetry.

6. The adjacent semi-detached houses on Kestrel Close are a designed as a pair of dormer bungalows. To the rear along Rook Lane the adjacent semi-detached houses are set forward of the side of the appeal site and due to side extensions present a long frontage to the road. Based upon my observations, the difference in style and appearance of surrounding properties provides an opportunity for an extension at the side of the appeal property which would complement the existing house and assimilate with the wider street scene.

7. The Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2 Householder extension guide February 2004 (SPG) acknowledges that a high standard of design for side extensions is required because of their potential visibility. The guide requires a minimum space of 1 metre to the boundary to avoid creating a terracing effect or alternatively the extension should be set back from the front elevation of the house. It states that the roof shape should follow that of the main roof.

8. The two-storey and single storey side extension would be set back from the front elevation and set down from the main roof ridge line. The existing porch structure would be removed, and a new window would be placed within the existing front elevation. The new window would reference the arrangement of the windows on the attached property and the set back of the extension would allow the form of the original semi-detached houses to be the most prominent mass. Overall the siting, size and design of the extension would incorporate suitable detailing, fenestration and demarcation relative to the scale and form of the original house and semi-detached pair to appear subservient. It would, therefore, be viewed as a complementary addition that would not look out of place. Consequently, it would not unbalance or harm their appearance or have an unacceptable impact upon the character of the street scene.

9. The rear elevation of the extension would be flush with the existing house wall, the roof would be lower. Views towards the rear of the building would be seen in the context of the existing double garage and the adjacent pair of semi-detached houses on Rook Lane, so that the extension would not be unduly prominent or dominant in its corner position.

10. Although the extension would be more visible because of its corner location, its size and siting would allow enough space to be retained around the building for it to sit comfortably within the plot. Therefore, the spacious appearance that contributes to the character and appearance of the area would be maintained.

11. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. The proposal, therefore would not conflict with Policy SD3 and Policy SD8 of the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Local Plan, adopted January 2019, together with the associated guidance in the SPG. The policies, when taken together and amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development is designed to the highest possible standard, reinforce local distinctiveness and domestic extensions are in keeping with the property and street scene in terms of style, proportions and materials. The policies are consistent with the design objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework to which the proposal also accords.

Other Matters

12. Whilst the position of the fence line at the side relative to the existing hedge has been raised, it does not form part of the proposal before me and therefore, does not have a material bearing on the outcome of this appeal.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard timescale condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty of the development for which permission is granted. I have also imposed a condition relating to materials in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the area.

14. As the existing parking arrangements are unaffected by the development, I do not consider that a requirement to maintain the existing parking layout in perpetuity is necessary and therefore such a condition would not meet the tests for applying conditions set out in the Framework. I will therefore not impose this condition.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Diane Cragg

INSPECTOR