
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2022

by David English BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W0734/D/22/3301938

20 Canberra Road, Middlesbrough, TS7 8EX

- 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 Jonathan Mann against the decision of Middlesbrough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/0285/FUL, dated 21 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension to semi-detached house, including rear garden room.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a two-storey side extension to a semi-detached house, including rear garden room at 20 Canberra Road, Middlesbrough, TS7 8EX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/0285/FUL, dated 21 April 2022, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Existing & Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations 01; Ordnance Survey location plan; and Proposed Site Block Plan 02.
 - 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.
 - 4) The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until a parking area sufficient to accommodate two cars has been provided within the site in accordance with plans and construction details that shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. That area shall thereafter be kept available at all times for the parking of vehicles.

Preliminary Matters

2. Planning permission was partly refused due to there being insufficient parking to serve the extended house. However, the Council recognise that an additional vehicle space can be accommodated in the front garden, and that this could be achieved by condition. I am satisfied that adequate parking provision can be achieved through an appropriate condition.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the side extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached house located in a mature residential area. The house has been altered in the past to provide a single garage to the side and a single storey rear extension. The area in the vicinity of the appeal site comprises semi-detached houses of the same design. The dominant design features common to the houses is their hipped roofs, large flat-roofed two-storey front bay windows, low front boundary walls which give a generally open feel to the streets, and the regular first floor gaps between pairs of houses. These features create a distinctive rhythm in the visual appearance of the area.
5. A number of houses have been altered, including through the addition of two-storey side extensions. Some of these extensions, particularly those in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, have created a terracing effect because they either join with the neighbouring house or are built up to their boundary at first floor level and thereby leave no gap between properties. The Council indicates that most of these extensions appear to have been added prior to the adoption of Middlesbrough's Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (January 2013) ('the SPD').
6. The first-floor element of the proposal is set back from the front wall of the house. This allows for a suitable lowering of the roof ridge below that of the main house. The extension is set in from the boundary with 22 Canberra Road. This allows for a gap to be retained between houses. The side extension is no more than half the width of the original house and appears as a subservient addition. In all these regards the development accords with the SPD. Whilst I recognise that the Council remain concerned about the overall scale of the extensions proposed, and I accept these would be substantial, I note that the house is set within a reasonably large plot having a long rear garden. The combined effect of the proposals would not be out of scale with the host property and would be in keeping with the character of the area.
7. The Council has drawn my attention to a recent dismissed appeal concerning extensions proposed at the appeal property (ref. APP/W0734/D/21/3285967). The evidence before me indicates that the side extension is narrower than that previously proposed. Its bulk is thereby reduced. Importantly, in accordance with guidance in the SPD, a clear separation is proposed between the side wall of the extension and the boundary with No 22. This gap, along with the use of a hipped roof over the first-floor extension, retains a degree of openness between houses and prevents the creation or continuation of terracing in this section of Canberra Road.
8. I note that the previous appeal decision concluded that the unusual duplication of front doors was found to result in the front extension having a design that would be inappropriate. However, the proposed front elevation now includes a garage door which is consistent with the character and appearance of houses in the vicinity. Furthermore, the front extension does not project beyond the visually dominant bay window and would not stand out from the main house.

9. As a result of modifications made subsequent to the earlier appeal decision, the proposal before me is for a materially different development. I find the scale and design of the development would not result in harm to the original house or to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the development presents no conflict with Policies DC1 or CS5 of the Middlesbrough Core Strategy (February 2008) which seek to ensure that all new development demonstrates high quality design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character and appearance of the area. It would also accord with the SPD as set out above.

Other Matters

10. The Council refer to the effect on the privacy of residents at 18 Canberra Road arising from patio doors proposed in the rear extension. The Council suggests that close-boarded fencing would overcome this effect. From my site visit I note that the boundary between the appeal property and the rear garden of No 18 comprises a tall, solid larch-lap fence. The presence of this fence will prevent harm arising to the privacy of residents at No 18.

Conditions

11. Conditions are necessary regarding commencement within statutory time limits; in the interests of certainty on the plans approved; to ensure the character and appearance of the area is not harmed by the materials used in the development; and in the interests of highway safety.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the development would accord with the development plan as a whole and therefore the appeal should be allowed.

David English

INSPECTOR