



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 August 2022

by J Symmons BSc (Hons) CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24th August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H0724/D/22/3298987

2 Mill Court, High Street, Greatham, Hartlepool TS25 2ED

- 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 Kenneth Elliott against the decision of Hartlepool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref H/2021/0542, dated 25 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as a single story extension including WC and porch area to front of property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the semi-detached properties and immediate surrounding area.

Reasons

3. Mill Court is a small residential cul-de-sac set back from the terraced housing along High Street. The cul-de-sac has a parking area at its end and a number of semi-detached properties surrounding it. A public footpath runs from High Street through the courtyard and into the housing estate to the rear. The appeal property is part of an identical pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings with pitched roofs which are situated off the end of the cul-de-sac. These dwellings have grass and planted front gardens which are typically enclosed by low timber fencing. The property sits within the Greatham Conservation Area (GCA).
4. The proposal would consist of a single storey front entrance extension with pitched roof. It would be built in similar materials to the host building.
5. While the pair of semi-detached properties sit as an isolated block, with good separation to the other properties, they also have a very symmetrical and balanced frontage. Although views of the properties would be limited from outside of the cul-de-sac, they would still be visible to occupants of the neighbouring properties and users of the footpath. Even with the moderate size of the extension and its positioning to the far front corner of the host property, it would still create a relatively bulky and incongruous addition to the front elevation. It would also necessitate relocating the entrance door to the side of the extension which would result in an unattractive front end gable aspect.

Overall, the extension and door repositioning would unbalance the fenestration of the semi-detached properties and harm the character and appearance of them and the immediate surrounding area.

6. Accordingly, for these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the semi-detached properties and character and appearance of the immediate surrounding area. Consequently, it would be contrary to policies HSG11 and QP4 of the Hartlepool Local Plan (2018) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). These policies seek, amongst other matters, to ensure that new development would be designed to a high quality, be sympathetic to the existing dwelling and would not adversely affect the character of the surrounding residential area.

Other Matters

7. As the appeal property sits within the GCA, the development must be considered within the context of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 this requires that I pay particular attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
8. Furthermore, paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a conservation area, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
9. I note that the GCA's special character is predominately derived from the village centre around The Green, its early development as a religious based hospital in the 13th century and as an agricultural settlement, with subsequent village growth added early 19th century individual housing and terraces and late Victorian terraced housing. Due to the host property's understated appearance, simple detailing and positioning away and behind the main GCA's characteristic housing, the proposal would not be seen in the context of the wider GCA. As such it would not impact on the significance of the GCA when considered as a whole and the character and appearance of the GCA would be preserved.
10. I appreciate that there were no objections from the formal consultees to the proposal, with respect of the special character of the GCA and specific technical matters. I also note that Greatham Parish Council did not object due to the proposal being in an isolated location and one off in nature. However, these do not change my view that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the semi-detached properties and the immediate surrounding area.
11. The appellant raises a number of issues regarding the Council's handling of this application which relates to it not working with them in a positive and proactive manner. However, this matter is outside the scope of my decision.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above and having considered the development plan as a whole along with all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Symmons

INSPECTOR