
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 August 2022

by David English BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W0734/D/22/3302148

1 Clevegate, Middlesbrough, TS7 0QU

- 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 Paul Thompson against the decision of Middlesbrough Council.
 - The application Ref 22/0198/FUL, dated 20 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2022.
 - The development proposed was originally described as a single storey side and rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a single storey extension to front and side at 1 Clevegate, Middlesbrough, TS7 0QU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 22/0198/FUL, dated 20 March 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 approved plan No. 1 CLEVEGATE – 001 Revision 1 using the external finishes described in the application form.

Preliminary Matters

2. The development proposed was originally described as a side and rear extension. I have changed the description to that set out above which reflects the description agreed by the parties.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a modern detached house constructed with buff facing bricks and brown profiled concrete roof tiles. A conservatory extension has been added to the rear. The house occupies a corner plot at the junction of Guisborough Road and Clevegate and is the first property leading into a modern estate comprising detached houses of differing designs. It is set apart from other dwellings fronting Guisborough Road and appears distinct.

5. Although access to the appeal property is taken from Clevegate, the elevation facing onto Guisborough Road appears to be the front of the house, and that is what is suggested in the plans.
6. Middlesbrough's Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (January 2013) indicates that front extensions are generally unacceptable because they assume an extremely conspicuous and inappropriate appearance. However, the house is well screened along Guisborough Road and on the corner with Clevegate, in part by tall close boarded fencing and by a mature, well maintained evergreen hedge, currently at a height of around 2.5 metres. The front elevation is not prominent from close or distant vantage points.
7. When viewed in context I find that the extension is subservient in scale to the host property and would appear as an appropriately sized addition to the house. I recognise, as the Council suggest, that the existing front elevation displays a good degree of symmetry with regard to its openings, and I note the Council's concerns about the external finishes of the proposed extension which differ in appearance from the original house. However, it is well screened and is not conspicuous, nor of an overbearing nature. It is unlikely that the screening would be removed because it provides a good degree of privacy to the house and gardens from vehicles and pedestrians using Guisborough Road and Clevegate.
8. I find the development would not result in harm to the character of the host property or the area for the reasons I have set out. Accordingly, the development presents no conflict with Policies DC1 and CS5 of the Middlesbrough Core Strategy (February 2008) which seek to ensure that development demonstrates a high standard of design which is well integrated with the immediate context, and that the quality of development enhances the built environment.

Other Matters

9. The Council refers to a recent local appeal decision which they say deals with matters relating to the dominance of extensions to front elevations (APP/W0734/D/21/3283289). I have reviewed that decision and note that the proposal involved, amongst other things, a two-storey side extension and a first-floor extension to the front of a semi-detached house at the end of a cul-de-sac of similar houses. I note the Inspector in that case commented on the openness of the character of that cul-de-sac which is not the case here. I can find few similarities between that case and the current proposal before me and so it has no bearing on my decision. In any event, I have determined the appeal on its merits and the evidence before me.

Conditions

10. I note that the Council have suggested a condition requiring materials to be used in the proposed extension should match those used in the existing house. For the reasons given above I am satisfied that the materials proposed in the application forms are appropriate. I have attached a condition which specifies the approved plans and the external finishes proposed in the application form along with a condition requiring commencement within statutory time limits. These conditions are necessary in the interests of certainty and to protect the character and appearance of the dwelling.

Conclusion

11. 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