



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 October 2023

by Caroline Mulloy BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23rd October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W0734/D/23/3328323

55 Coulby Manor Farm, Middlesbrough TS8 0RY

- 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 and Mrs Thomas against the decision of Middlesbrough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/0277/FUL, dated 14 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 29 June 2023.
 - The development proposed is first floor side extension with garage conversion to study/store and external opening alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two-storey, detached dwelling situated on a modern housing estate. The cul-de-sac is comprised of detached dwellings constructed in brick with pantile roofs and gable features and porches to the front. Properties are situated in relatively spacious plots with a small front garden and larger gardens to the rear. The gaps between properties varies in the estate, illustrated by the wider gap between the appeal property and number 54 Coulby Manor Farm on one side and the narrow gap on the other side adjacent to number 56 Coulby Manor Farm (No. 56). However, even in the case of the narrower gaps views of the gardens and houses to the rear can be seen through the gaps to the sides of dwellings and over the single storey attached garages which adds to the sense of openness.
4. The Middlesbrough Urban Design Guide (UDG) Supplementary Planning Document 2013 states that a side extension should be no more than 50% of the width of the existing dwelling and the appeal proposal complies in this regard. Criterion a of paragraph 5.8 of the UDG raises concerns that two-storey or first floor only extensions at the side give rise to issues of overbearing impact on the street scene and the need to prevent terracing between pairs of semi-detached houses. Whilst the property is detached, the first part of the criterion, nevertheless, applies which seeks to avoid two-storey extensions giving rise to issues of overbearing impact on the street scene.

5. Criterion b provides guidance on how to prevent an overbearing impact by setting the first-floor section of the extension back from the building line by 1m with an associated reduction in the height of the extension relative to the original roof or introducing a personal side access path 1m wide. The appellant points to the existing 1m gap between the appeal property and the adjacent property, No. 56 created by the footpath which enables access to the rear garden. Taken together with a similar gap to the side of No 56 this provides a gap of around 2m between the properties overall which would avoid a terracing effect.
6. However, criterion c of paragraph 5.4 of the HDG states that all extensions should be subservient and of a scale that is appropriate to the existing building and not be of an overbearing nature. Whilst the width of the extension is modest, due to the absence of a set back and set down, the extension would appear flush with the existing building and the distinction between the original building and the extension would be lost. It would, therefore, fail to appear subservient to the host property. Furthermore, given the absence of a set back/set down the extension would appear to have greater mass and bulk to the detriment of the street scene. Moreover, it would have greater visual impact in terms of the perceived gap between properties. Whilst I note that No 56 is set at a slight angle to the appeal property this is not so significant as to reduce the visual impact of the proposal. Consequently, it would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area.
7. Attention is drawn to a previous planning application for a flush extension at the appeal property which was approved in 2007; however, this was determined in the context of a different planning policy framework. The appellant also points to several two storey side extensions in the vicinity which lack a set-back or set down. However, very limited details of those cases are before me and I cannot, therefore, be certain that they were built within the current planning policy framework. Furthermore, I noted a larger number of extensions which were set back and set down from the ridge of the roof. These factors limit the weight I can attach to these cases in my Decision. Whilst the proposal would have some benefit for the appellant in terms of providing extended accommodation, I am not persuaded that this could not be achieved by other means.
8. In conclusion, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host property and the area. It would, therefore, conflict with policies DC1(b) and CS5 of the Middlesbrough Core Strategy 2008 and the HDG which collectively seek to achieve a high-quality design.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons stated, and taking into account all other considerations, the appeal should be dismissed.

Caroline Mulloy

Inspector