



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 October 2023

by L Clark BA(HONS) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V0728/W/23/3326425

171-173 Borough Road Store, Redcar Lane, Redcar, Redcar and Cleveland TS10 2EJ

- 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 R Singh against the decision of Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council.
 - The application Ref R/2023/0011/FF, dated 29 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 12 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is proposed demolition of garage and replace dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Applications for costs

2. An application for costs was made by the appellant against the Council. This is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The address on the application form refers to the site being at No 171-173 Borough Road Store (BRS), Redcar Lane, Redcar and Cleveland, Redcar TS10 2EJ. For clarity, whilst the site does relate to BRS, Redcar Lane, the site is situated to the rear of BRS and is accessed from Borough Road.
4. Initial plans submitted by the appellant did not correspond with those plans submitted by the Council. During the course of the appeal, the appellant has confirmed that drawings '001 Rev D Proposed Plans & Elevations' and '002 Rev B Site & Location Plan' were submitted to the Council on 11 April 2023. These plans match those submitted by the Council.
5. I note that the Council's Decision Notice refers to the following amended plans received on the 12/04/2023: 'Location plan and site plan' and 'Plans and elevations', however the Council does not refer to updated revisions. For clarity, I have assessed the appeal on the basis of drawings '001 Rev D Proposed Plans & Elevations' and '002 Rev B Site & Location Plan'.

Main Issues

6. The main issues are:
 - The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and

- Whether the proposed parking arrangement would be suitable for future intended occupants.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

7. The appeal premises is partially cleared with a single storey brick outbuilding set close to the boundary with No 175 Redcar Lane and No 4 Borough Road. BRS is a two storey premises with a single storey pitched roof extension wrapped around the side and rear. The single storey element projects beyond the established building line of Borough Road. Access to BRS is via Redcar Lane, with customer parking bays set on Borough Road arranged perpendicular to the road. Nearby properties are predominantly two storey semi-detached residential dwellings with hipped roofs and projecting bay windows, set back from the road by their associated gardens. No 1 Borough Road is located to the opposing corner of Redcar Lane and Borough Road and has a detached double garage to the rear, located adjacent to No 3. Parking restrictions are in place in the form of double yellow lines and bollards within the grass verges and pavement.
8. The appeal site is readily visible and creates a visual break between the domestic rhythm and form of Borough Road and the busy main road of Redcar Lane.
9. The proposed dwelling would be set towards the rear of the site, stepped behind the established building line of Borough Road, with a 1.8 metre high fence screening part of the front of the proposed dwelling. The height of the proposed house and its position within the site are out of step with the established building line, resulting in an uncharacteristic and incongruous form of development in the Borough Road street scene.
10. When viewed from a distance the set back of the proposed dwelling within its plot assist in retaining visual spaciousness of Borough Road. When viewed from closer in the street scene, the roof of the dwelling would be the dominant feature, exacerbated by the proposed screening of the front elevation by a tall fence. The lack of on street presence of the new dwelling would appear at odds with the prevailing character, which is represented by pairs of semi-detached houses of consistent height on an established building line with front gardens with low walls or hedgerows to the front boundary.
11. I acknowledge that the proposed dwelling is single storey, would utilise materials similar to the existing property and would incorporate a hipped roof similar to nearby properties. However the lack of street presence fails to respond to the established street pattern resulting in the proposal contributing negatively to the established character and appearance of Borough Road.
12. I note that there is a detached double garage immediately opposite the site which is set back from the street and has a visible presence on Borough Road. Whilst there is hard landscaping to the front it is considered appropriate given its functional use, and as such is considered to have a neutral effect on the established character and appearance.
13. I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, contrary to Policy SD4 of the Redcar and Cleveland Local Plan (2018) (Local Plan) which seeks, amongst other matters,

to ensure development improve the character and quality of the surrounding area and establish a strong sense of place responding to the local character.

Parking

14. The main concern of the Council relates to the proposal failing to demonstrate suitable parking provision, in accordance with Policy SD4 (P) of the Local Plan. Policy SD4 (P) seeks to ensure developments provide suitable and safe vehicular access and parking suitable for its use and location. Two parking spaces would be provided for the one bed dwelling, laid out in tandem to the front and accessed from Borough Road. Each space would have sufficient room both sides to allow for car doors to open and for pedestrian movement.
15. As the Council have not directed me to any specific parking standards, I consider two parking spaces for a one bed dwelling to be sufficient.
16. I therefore conclude that the proposal would provide suitable parking arrangements for future intended occupants in accordance with Policy SD4 (P) of the Local Plan.

Other Matters

17. The appellant claims that the proposed dwelling would provide accommodation for staff associated with BRS, thereby reducing the distance staff would be required to travel. I have found that the appeal proposal conflicts with the development plan and the benefit of providing accommodation does not outweigh the harm identified.
18. I note the appellant considers the site to have no meaningful purpose and that the area gathers rubbish. However, the site serves to create a visual break between properties on Redcar Lane and those on Borough Road which form two distinct street patterns. The presence of rubbish, whilst unattractive within the street scene is a maintenance issue which carries limited weight and does not alter those conclusions that I have reached.
19. I note the appellant's statement regarding sourcing locally produced materials and the absence of harm regarding residential amenity for existing neighbouring properties with regards to overlooking and overshadowing. However, these are neutral matters in the overall planning balance as they would be a likely requirement of any well-designed development.
20. Furthermore, I agree with the appellant with regards to the approximate date of the surrounding properties being 1930's as opposed to the Council's description of its Victorian origin, but notwithstanding this the appeal proposal would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.
21. The Council have drawn my attention to the proposed layout and reduction in available off-street parking associated with BRS, however four off-street car parking spaces on Borough Road would be retained as part of this proposal. During my site visit I observed that BRS had a steady stream of patrons arriving by foot and by car, with those arriving by car utilising the parking spaces on Borough Road. Whilst I acknowledge the Council's concerns regarding the loss of parking spaces associated with the store, I have not been presented with any evidence to support their claim.

Conclusion

22. Whilst I find no harm with regards to the proposed parking arrangement for future intended occupiers, this is not the case with regards to the impact of the proposed dwelling upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such, for the reasons set out above, the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no other considerations which indicate that the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

L Clark

INSPECTOR