



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 June 2025

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W0734/W/25/3360548

Land between 16 and 18 Cambridge Road, Middlesbrough

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Dr H Mohammed against the decision of Middlesbrough Council.
 - The application Ref is 21/0652/FUL.
 - The development proposed is reinstatement of lapsed approval (part application no. M/FP/0915/15/P) for plots 3-5 only on development of land between 16 and 18 Cambridge Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Linthorpe Conservation Area (CA).

Preliminary Matters

3. In the banner header above, I have set out a truncated form of the description of the proposal from the application form, omitting that which is unnecessary to accurately describe the scheme.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises part of an elongated strip of land, bounded on 3 sides by neighbouring gardens, with a frontage onto Cambridge Road. At the time of my site visit, I saw that there are 2 dwellings on the wider site that are partially constructed, one at the front and one at the rear. The appeal site sits in between and is somewhat overgrown with vegetation.
5. Cambridge Road is predominantly characterised by traditional detached and semi-detached dwellings, set back from the footpath behind semi-enclosed front gardens and driveways. Plots in this part of the road are typically rectangular in shape and generously sized with large gardens. There are Victorian and Edwardian houses at the west end and interwar houses at the east end. Prevailing features include decorative fascia boards, traditional fenestration, including large bay windows, and brickwork features. Most dwellings display a considerable degree of symmetry which adds to the formality of the street scene. The north side of the street retains more of this traditional appearance and layout than the south side, which is interspersed with more contemporary development.
6. The wider CA has its origins in the historic village of Linthorpe, which evolved over time into high quality late nineteenth and early twentieth century suburbs. In so far

as it relates to this appeal, the significance of the CA is derived from the traditional appearance of the buildings, their architectural consistency and planned layout.

7. The proposal would introduce 3 detached dwellings to the central part of the wider site. While this would extend development down much of the length of the plot, there is already a dwelling at the rear, and it is not uncommon for development to extend deep into plots on this side of the road.
8. Nevertheless, the principal elevations of the proposed dwellings would appear somewhat flat and featureless. The proposed brick heads, sills and quoins would provide some interest. However, there would be little to break up the expanse of brickwork across the considerable width of these elevations. The proposed doors and uPVC casement windows would be out of proportion, while their positioning would lack symmetry, particularly at Plot 3. The integral garages within the ground floor at Plots 1 and 2 would further unbalance each dwelling.
9. Critically, these attributes are not prevalent among the traditional houses in the CA. Combined with their uncharacteristic orientation, the proposed dwellings would appear as an incongruous addition to the street scene and a noticeable departure from the features and architectural interest that positively contribute to the significance of the CA.
10. My attention has been drawn to 3 previous planning permissions on the wider site for; a nursing home in 2013¹, 6 dwellings in 2015² and 3 dwellings in 2019³. While copies of decision notices have been provided, the full details of each case and the circumstances that led to those decisions have not. It is thus not possible to draw any meaningful comparison between these previous schemes and the appeal proposal. Nonetheless, each proposal must be considered on its individual merits. Moreover, except for the 2019 permission, the other previous permissions have lapsed and so do not carry any weight as realistic fallback positions in this case. This therefore does not lead me to a different conclusion on this main issue.
11. In conclusion, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It would thus conflict with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
12. The proposal would therefore also be contrary to Policies CS4, CS5 and DC1 of the Core Strategy Adopted February 2008. These policies, among other provisions, seek to ensure that development makes the most efficient use of land while protecting and enhancing Middlesbrough's historic heritage and townscape character; enhances the best characteristics of the built environment to create a positive identity for the town; and achieves the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas. They also seek to ensure that the visual appearance and layout of the development and its relationship with the surrounding area in terms of scale, design and materials will be of a high quality.
13. With respect to paragraph 215 of the Framework, less than substantial harm would be caused to the significance of the CA, which is a designated heritage asset. Paragraph 212 of the Framework is clear that great weight should be given to the

¹ Council Ref M/FP/0728/13/P

² Council Ref M/FP/0915/15/P

³ Council Ref 19/0009/FUL

asset's conservation. The proposal would provide additional housing on an urban site with associated access to local amenities and public transport. It would bring a vacant site that is currently somewhat unkempt into use. There would temporarily be a boost to employment during construction, and additional residents may contribute to the local economy and vitality of the community. However, having regard to these factors and the scale and context of the proposal, I consider the public benefits would be modest and insufficient to outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

14. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan, taken as a whole. I have found no material considerations that indicate the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. Consequently, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR