The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 February 2017

by Paul Singleton BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 08th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4718/D/16/3166329
11 Gisbourne Road, Bradley, Huddersfield HD2 1SD

- 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 & Mrs L Craven against the decision of Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref 2016/62/92891/W, dated 24 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2016.
- The development proposed is demolition of outbuilding and erection of two storey extension to side.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

Reasons

3. Gisbourne Road is characterised by regularly spaced pairings of semi-detached houses of mainly uniform design. Very few of the houses have been extended or have undergone significant external alterations. The houses on the south side follow a common building line but the sloping nature of the road provides for some variety in roofscape as each pair of properties steps down to accommodate the change in ground levels.

4. There is a standard separation distance between each pair of houses. At ground floor level, this gap is filled by the front elevation of the shared outhouse on the common boundary and a connecting, front boundary wall that extends to the side elevation of each house and frames a door or gate giving access to a side passageway. Because these connecting walls and front elevations to the outhouses are of limited height and are set back by about 0.5 metre (m) from the main façades of the houses, a clear physical and visual break between each pair of properties is maintained.

5. The 2 storey extension proposed would achieve a degree of subservience to the host property by means of its first floor elevation being set back by about 0.6m and its roof ridge being set below that of the existing dwelling. However, the positioning of its front elevation flush with that of the existing dwelling would significantly increase the width of the dwelling at ground floor level and create

a visual imbalance with the other half of the semi-detached pairing. It would also be discordant in the street scene because it would not respect the set back that has been used in the design of all of the outhouses and associated front boundary walls.

6. By reason of its projection to the shared boundary between Nos. 11 and 13, the proposal would lead to a substantial diminution in the visual break between the two houses, notwithstanding the set-back at first floor level. It would result in a terracing effect and, if No. 13 was to be extended in the same way, the physical and visual break between the two pairs of semi-detached properties would be lost completely. The introduction of an upper storey extension of the width proposed would also introduce a prominent and incongruous element into an otherwise uniform street scene.

7. The plans show no proposals for the infilling or other treatment of the open gap to the side of No 13 that would result from the demolition of the outbuilding and the front boundary wall that it supports. The presence of such a gap or its filling in by some alternative means would be likely to interrupt the existing rhythm of the street and add a further discordant element to the street scene.

8. For these reasons I find that the proposal would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the host property and of the wider street scene in Gisbourne Road. Notwithstanding the appellant's comments as to the circumstances required for other householders to be able to propose similar extensions, I consider that a grant of planning permission for the proposed development would create a precedent that could, over time, result in substantial harm to the character and appearance of the area.

9. The proposal would, therefore, conflict with saved Policy BE1 of the revised Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2007), which states that all development should be of good quality design, and saved Policy BE2 which requires that new development should be designed so that it is in keeping with any surrounding development. Conflict would also arise with saved UDP Policy D2 which states that planning permission will be granted for new development provided that the proposals do not prejudice visual amenity and the character of the surroundings.

Other Matters

10. I note the appellant's reference to extensions carried out to other properties in the local area. I have no information as to the planning history of those developments and am unable to form any view as to whether or not the Council has consistently applied its policies with regard to residential extensions. However, I observed on my site visit that many of the examples are not comparable due to their siting and orientation relative to the nearest neighbouring properties. Although others might be more similar to the appeal proposal there are no such developments within Gisbourne Road where the uniform character and appearance of the properties remains largely intact.

11. I accept that the proposal would benefit the appellants in terms of the additional accommodation that it would provide. However, this would be a wholly private benefit that would not outweigh the harm to character and appearance of the area or the resultant conflict with the development plan.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all matters raised I concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

Paul Singleton

INSPECTOR