

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2017

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/P1133/D/17/3176332

97 Coombe Vale Road, Teignmouth, TQ14 9EN

- 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 John Wickham against the decision of Teignbridge District Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00061/FUL, dated 31 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a rear, single-storey extension and formation of parking at front with new windows and doors.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal proposal comprises two distinct elements. There is no dispute between the main parties that the proposed single-storey extension is identical to that which benefits from an extant planning permission given under Ref 16/02975/FUL. The appeal therefore focuses on the proposed parking to the front.
3. The Council has confirmed that there was a typographical error on the decision notice where it incorrectly makes reference to a drawing numbered PL2 Rev A. For the avoidance of doubt, I can confirm that I have considered drawing numbers S1, S2, PL1, and PL2 in relation to this appeal.

Main Issue

4. In light of the above, the main issue is the effect of the proposed parking to the front upon the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

5. In common with all the other properties along the west side of Coombe Vale Road, No 97 is set at significantly lower ground levels than the adjoining pavement. As such its first floor windows appear level with the road. These properties stand in noticeable contrast to those opposite which follow the topography of the area and stand on significantly elevated levels.
-

6. No 97 has a red brick wall to its front boundary adjacent to the back edge of the pavement and approximately 1350mm high. This screens from view the deeply sunken level of the front garden and is part of a similar enclosure that runs for some reasonable distance to the front of Nos 87 to 99 (odd) Coombe Vale Road, breached only by pedestrian entrances or, in the cases at Nos 87 and 99, by single-width parking spaces with the wall mostly retained across the remainder width of these two frontages. Elsewhere along this side of Coombe Vale Road I saw that a similar roadside enclosure largely prevails. Where frontage parking has been provided, in most instances it is to the side of the property where the presence of any parked vehicle is not overtly dominant in relation to the dwelling. In cases where parking is to the front of the dwelling these are mostly single-width, but in every case only with the exception of No 81, I saw various retained sections of clearly defining front boundary wall. Even where garages to the front have been erected, by virtue of their built form, these maintain an enclosure to the back edge of the pavement which is reasonably consistent with the established character of the street scene.
7. The only example I saw where the dwelling's frontage was completely open to the roadside and entirely hard surfaced was at No 81. Although neatly executed, these works stood out in contrast to other parking spaces and appeared to me as overly dominant and out of context with the street scene.
8. In this case the entire front wall to No 97 would be removed save for a single brick pier at the pedestrian gated entrance adjacent to No 95. A hard-surface would then be constructed up to the front face of the dwelling at first floor level and flush with the pavement. This would result in an open frontage that would be atypical for the majority of properties in the area and would create a setting for the dwelling that would be entirely dominated by the presence of cars when parked. Similar to No 81 I find that this would be incongruous and harmful to the street scene. As such, this part of the proposal would conflict with the aims and objectives of Policies S1A, S1, S2 and WE8 of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033, all of which require development to be successfully integrated with its surroundings and complementary to the character of the area.
9. I appreciate the appellant's desire to improve access to the dwelling but due to the complete loss of the front boundary enclosure and the dominant size of the parking area, the proposal would be achieved with significant harm to the character and appearance of the street scene.
10. I have noted that planning permission was given for a similarly described development at the appeal property in 2004 but that was not implemented and has now lapsed. I also note that a development fitting a similar description was approved for No 83 in 2010, although I saw that only a single space to the side of that dwelling has been constructed. However, both of those cases pre-date the currently adopted Local Plan and I have no other details of the applications that were considered at that time. In this instance I have considered the proposal on its own merits and against the current policies of the development plan, which was adopted in 2014.
11. Overall, for the reasons given, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John D Allan INSPECTOR