
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2019

by James Taylor BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9th July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1110/D/19/3228724

143 Fore Street, Heavitree, Exeter EX1 3BR

- 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 Nash against the decision of Exeter City Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0220/FUL, dated 12 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2019.
 - The development proposal is described as "Raise ridge by 300mm to allow head height for loft conversion with rear dormer".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed. Planning permission is granted to "raise the ridge by 300mm to allow head height for loft conversion with rear dormer" at 143 Fore Street, Heavitree, Exeter EX1 3BR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/0220/FUL, dated 12 February 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 190009.TIMBERCRAFT-NASH.01SV and 190009.TIMBERCRAFT-NASH.02PP.
 - 3) The tiles to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling and street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is occupied by a 2-storey mid-terraced property with slate tiles to the roof. Each property is separated by red brick chimneys and a 'parapet' wall feature, that extends up the party wall between properties. Consequently, the terrace's roof is not a continuous line, but is regularly interrupted by these architectural details.
4. These architectural features provide demarcation of the properties and offset the variations in eaves and ridge levels across the terrace, including most

notably that change close by to the appeal site between 145 and 147 Fore Street.

5. From the front the alterations to the property would include the addition of two rooflights and raising the height of the ridge by approximately 300mm. There is no pavement on the opposite side of the highway, and from the pavement along the terrace the views of the roof are at most limited. From further away, such as the junction of Fore Street and Butts Road the alteration to the ridge height would be obscured by the architectural features of the terrace. Any other views would likely be brief and/or distant.
6. The alterations to the front would not form prominent alterations to the dwelling and street scene from public vantage points. Furthermore, the alterations would be mitigated by the parapet walls and red brick chimneys and seen in the context of varied ridge levels along the terrace and in very close proximity to the significantly higher ridge at 147 Fore Street.
7. From the rear the visible alterations to the property would include the erection of a substantial flat roof dormer. This would extend from just above the eaves level up to the proposed ridge level (approximately 300mm higher than existing). The dormer would occupy the full width of the roof positioned on the parapet walls. I have noted the presence of several dormer windows at the rear of this terrace and indeed elsewhere from views at Heavitree Pleasure Ground. Dormers are a characteristic feature on the rear of properties and take a varied number of forms. Furthermore, I have observed that very similar dormers to that proposed here already exist at the rear of the terrace.
8. From Whipton Lane and Heavitree Pleasure Ground views of the rear of this terrace are limited, relatively distant and seen in the context of a large expansive rear of terrace elevation which has seen a number of alterations. The proposal would not be prominent within this context. Given this, the limited increase in ridge height, its location to the rear of the property and that similar dormers are evident in the area, the proposal would not cause harm.
9. I have considered the proposal in the context of the council's Supplementary Planning Document – "Householder's Guide to Extension Design" dated September 2008, chapters 1 and 4. I note that it is adopted guidance and therefore afford it some weight. I also note that the whole document needs to be read in accordance with its general principles which includes assessing each case on its merits. I find technical conflict with the guiding principles on roof extensions and alterations. However, the site specific circumstances of this appeal mean that the scheme would still comply with the overall development plan objectives in relation to the protection of character and appearance of dwellings and the street scene.
10. Furthermore, I do not consider that the proposal would set any undesirable precedent, the maxim of assessing each case on its merits applies and that is what I have done with this specific proposal.
11. The proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the dwelling or street scene. It would not conflict with the adopted Exeter City Council Core Strategy policy CP17, or the Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 'saved' policy DG1.

12. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. This is in the interest of certainty. In order to protect the character and appearance of the dwelling and street scene, I have also imposed a condition requiring the tiles used in the construction of the proposal to match those of the existing building.
13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions listed above.

James Taylor

INSPECTOR