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# Appeal Decision

**by David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 15 May 2020**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/D/20/3246159**

**96 West Coker Road, Yeovil BA20 2JG**

- 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 Duncan Day against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref 19/03155/HOU, dated 8 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 January 2020.
  - The development proposed is new front porch and loft conversion, with roof slope amended and 3 no Velux windows to rear.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Procedural Matter

2. In response to travel restrictions currently in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic I consider that this appeal can be determined without the need for a physical site visit. This is because I have been able to reach a decision based on the information already available. Both the appellant and the Council were given an opportunity to provide comments on this approach and I have taken any responses into account.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed roof extension on the character and appearance of the area.

## Reasons

4. This part of West Coker Road has an established and pleasant suburban character with buildings generally facing the highway. There is a variety of building types which are predominantly dwellings. While the pitched roofs are a characteristic feature of many properties, there is variation to the shape of the roofs including with some gables, part hipped and fully hipped roofs present.
5. 96 West Coker Road forms one half of a semi-detached pair of dwellings. This pair, while set back from the road, are elevated above the level of the highway and are reasonably visible within the street scene. In particular, the fully hipped profile of both roofs and the double height bay windows contribute to the general symmetry of the front elevation. This general symmetry makes a positive and agreeable contribution to the character and appearance of these dwellings within this part of the road.

6. The proposal would extend the roof with the fully hipped roof to No 96 replaced by a gable with a reasonably small hip. While the design in itself would not be untypical of roofs elsewhere in the road, and the addition would be undertaken in matching materials and with no rooflights to the front slope, the proposal would add a fairly significant bulk to the roof. The addition would be readily apparent and the shape and form of the extended roof would unbalance the appearance of the building as a whole. As a consequence, in the circumstances of this pair of buildings, the extension would be an overly dominant and discordant addition that would detract from the symmetry of the overall roof form that is presently a feature that makes a positive visual contribution to these semi-detached dwellings. In this way, the scheme would cause visual harm to the character and appearance of this pair of buildings when viewed as a whole and thereby to the adjoining section of West Coker Road.
7. I have carefully considered the examples of the variety of roof forms in the area that have been drawn to my attention. The properties at Rye Gardens/Nathan Close have similar roof styles to the proposal, however, the roofs of these buildings are generally symmetrical and appear to have been designed in this coherent form from the outset. Examples of asymmetrical roofs are detailed but to my mind they do not present the same situation as the appeal site and the relationship with its attached neighbour which together form a generally symmetrical pair. Although highlighting the mix of roof forms, the further examples, such as the dwelling with the side dormer, do not satisfy me that they are comparable examples that help to justify the proposal as the appeal site has its own distinctive characteristics. I therefore attribute these other examples limited weight in my analysis.
8. In the light of the above analysis, I conclude that the roof extension would harm the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, the scheme would conflict with Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) and the National Planning Policy Framework which seek, notably, that proposals be designed to achieve a high quality and which preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the district.

### **Other Matters**

9. I have taken into account the recommendation from Yeovil Town Council that the proposal be approved and that there are no adverse comments from local residents and consultees. However, for the reasons outlined above, the extension would cause the identified harm and give rise to the associated development plan conflict.
10. I note the comments and frustration which have been expressed regarding the planning process prior to the decision of the Council, however, they are not matters for my consideration as part of the appeal which I have considered on its merits.

### **Conclusion**

11. Having regard to the above, and taking all other matters into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*David Wyborn*

INSPECTOR