



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 January 2023

by J White BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U1105/D/22/3307905

43 Halsdon Avenue, Exmouth, Devon EX8 3DW

- 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 Barnaby Griffith against the decision of East Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref 22/0758/FUL, dated 1 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is front, rear and first floor extension and internal alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a detached chalet bungalow with a simple form that lies in a row of five bungalows, originally of substantially the same design. The property backs on to Warren View Sports Ground (the playing fields), where the rear elevation of the dwellings along this side of Halsdon Avenue are prominent due to their position above the playing fields.
4. Many of the bungalows have been altered to some extent, including some with flat roof side dormers. There is also a variety of housing styles within the wider street scene, including opposite the appeal site, which are generally arranged in rows of similarly formed dwellings. However, despite the range, the rows of similarly styled dwellings and the general uniformity of the group of five bungalows, which includes the appeal site, contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
5. The proposal would significantly alter the form of the roof and introduce large box dormers that would merge with a bulky flat first floor element with a terrace at the rear. These alterations and additions would appear incongruous and notably different to the established character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. The proposed alterations to the roof, provision of dormers and flat roof element would substantially harm the established rhythm and form which persists between the bungalows and in the street. I do not consider that the set-back of the dormers and roof alterations from the front of the site offsets the harm that would be caused to the

character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area as appreciated from Halsdon Avenue.

6. The rear elevation of the appeal property and the adjacent bungalows have a generally consistent appearance, form and mass, albeit with various single storey additions. The proposal would appear as a bulky, top-heavy, dominant and discordant addition to the rear elevation, which is highly visible from the playing fields, drawing the eye, and appearing at odds with the aforementioned built form. In this respect, the proposal would materially harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area as appreciated from the playing fields.
7. The proposal also includes a single storey extension to the front of the dwelling as well as a garage. These would be modest in scale and appearance. The design of these elements would respect the vernacular of the dwelling and respond to the context of alterations carried out at neighbouring bungalows. As a result, these extensions would be subservient and would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the surrounding area.
8. However, having regard to the alterations to the roof, provision of dormers and the rear extension, the whole effect is a scheme which would lack a sense of subtleness and it would overpower the existing dwelling causing harm to its character and appearance, with consequent harm to the surrounding area.
9. The appellant has referred to case examples in the area. I observed during my site visit that those at Mudbank Lane are noticeably of a different character and appearance to the appeal site and its surroundings. They are obviously new and clearly different to the established character and appearance of smaller domestic properties such as the appeal site. As such, I do not find that the larger housing development is directly comparable with the appeal proposal, in terms of the effect on the character and appearance of the area.
10. I also observed the alterations at 45 Halsdon Avenue, which to my mind, given their appearance and single storey scale, are a markedly different design to that proposed in this instance. I have considered this appeal on its own merits and these examples do not deflect from my concerns relating to the appeal scheme.
11. For the above reasons, I conclude that the roof alterations, dormers and rear extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. It would, therefore, be contrary to Strategies 3, 5, 6 and 48, and Policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan. It would also be contrary to Policies EN1 and EB2 of the Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan. Together these policies require, amongst other things, new development to achieve high quality design and to be compatible with the local character. For similar reasons, the proposal would also be contrary to Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires high quality design.

Other Matters

12. I recognise the appellant's wish to extend the appeal property to provide more practical living space and to update the bungalow. Nonetheless, from all that I have seen, I am not convinced that this would be an acceptable design solution, and these are personal circumstances which can change over time

and the development would remain long after such circumstances have ceased to be relevant. Accordingly, I give this limited weight.

13. I note the appellant's representations regarding the process surrounding the determination of the planning application. I also note that the Council, whilst implying that the proposal could be acceptable prior to the determination of the application, advised that this was subject to the consideration of a senior officer. In any case, I have considered this appeal proposal on its planning merits and concluded that it would cause harm for the reasons set out above.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J White

INSPECTOR