



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2023

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 February 2023.

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/D/22/3302884

77 Park Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight, PO31 7NE

- 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 Rob Burton against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref. 22/00525/HOU, dated 21 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is remove the existing pitched roof and replace it with a new mansard roof with new dormer windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on Park Road opposite its junction with Princess Street and comprises a large detached two storey property within a spacious plot. The host property appears to date from the Victorian period and retains a number of its original period features including its prominent dual pitched (gabled) roof on the frontage. As with other properties on this side of Park Road the host property is prominent in views from public vantage points including on the approach from Princess Street.
4. Whilst the properties in the area include a mixture of styles, built form, heights and materials, as well as some modern infill/redevelopment, such as that found either side of the appeal site, the road still retains a large number of traditional (original) properties dating from a similar period to the host property. A number of these properties include similar period features, such as single or dual pitched roofs on the frontage. The area also contains terraces of traditional two storey cottages with pitched roofs. All of these traditional properties are attractive and are, in my view, a positive feature of the character of the area.
5. I recognise that some of the traditional properties in Park Road have been altered and extended, however, the scale of change that has occurred is modest. In some cases the alterations carried out have not been done sympathetically and they do not represent, therefore, examples of good design practice that should be followed and neither do they provide justification for

alterations that could further erode the traditional character of the area. The latter comments equally apply to some of the modern infill/redevelopment that has taken place in the road, albeit some have attempted to replicate the period features found on older properties, including the use of single or dual pitched roofs.

6. The appeal proposal involves replacing the existing dual pitched roof with a mansard roof, extending across the whole frontage of the host to provide new accommodation within the loft space (second floor level). The overall height (ridge), mass and extent of the roof, on the frontage, would increase.
7. Within the above context, I consider that the scale, height and design of the new mansard roof would, on balance, be excessive and result in an inappropriate addition to the host property. The proposal would not be sympathetic to the original design of the host or to that of other similar period properties in the road. My attention has not been drawn to any examples, within the local context, of properties with a full mansard addition and the proposal would introduce, therefore, an incongruous and prominent feature that would be out of keeping with the host property and the traditional built environment of the road.
8. Whilst I agree with the Appellant that mansard roofs are a common design approach, in this particular case it is not, in my view, the correct design approach to adopt and results in an awkward juxtaposition with the original front elevation of the host property that would be retained. It would disrupt the rhythm of the existing roofscape to the host through the loss of an attractive and integral period feature. Similar pitched roofs are a familiar feature of other older properties within the road, which, notwithstanding the presence of more modern infill/redevelopment, still make an important contribution to its character.
9. Overall, the proposed mansard, with its increased mass and ridge height and elongated expanse of roof, would not, in my view, sit comfortably on the appeal site leading to significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.
10. The Appellant has referred to the approved mansard on the former Cowes Police Station. However, I do not know the full planning circumstances of that case and I am not convinced it is comparable to the proposal specifically as that site is not on Park Road and does not, therefore, form part of the local context to the appeal site.
11. The Appellant also suggests that the refusal of planning permission was based on the personal tastes of the Council's Planning Officer to retain the existing built form. However, policy DM2 of the Island Plan Core Strategy & Development Management Development Plan Document (March 2012) (IOWCS), referred to in the reason for refusal, seeks to ensure that all new development is of a high quality and inclusive design so as to protect, conserve and enhance the existing environment, whilst allowing change to take place. The policy continues by stating that development will be expected to optimise the potential of a site but in doing so must have regard to the constraints of adjoining buildings, views and other features that contribute significantly to the character of an area.

12. A similar approach to policy DM2 is set out in paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework) including the requirement for new development to add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character. I accept that this paragraph also states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change. Even so, the changes proposed to the host property would result in a development that, in my view, would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Whilst that assessment involves an element of planning judgement, there is unfortunately nothing innovative in the design of the proposal or any other considerations that would lead me to reach a different finding.
13. Whilst I also note the Appellants personal circumstances and their reasons for seeking planning permission for the proposal and have taken these into account, they are not sufficient, either individually or cumulatively, to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
14. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would fail to comply with policy DM2 of the IOWCS and the corresponding policies of the Framework.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and having taken all the matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR