



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 November 2023

by Robin Buchanan BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/D/23/3326003

Midway, North Road, Dibden Purlieu SO45 4PF

- 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 Mrs Danielle Huxley against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 23/10594, dated 24 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 13 July 2023.
 - The development proposed was described as 'Remove existing side extension, garage and front porch. Construct a single storey side extension, an oak frame open porch and convert the loft with a hips to gable conversion with front and rear dormers'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to convert the loft with a hips to gable conversion with front and rear dormers.
2. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the remainder of the application and planning permission is granted to remove existing side extension, garage and front porch and construct a single storey side extension and an oak frame open porch at Midway, North Road, Dibden Purlieu SO45 4PF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/10594, dated 24 May 2023, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the conditions set out in the attached Schedule.

Preliminary Matter

3. Part of the proposal, to remove the existing side extension, garage and front porch and construct a single storey side extension and an oak frame open porch, is not in dispute between the main parties. These aspects are severable from the part to convert the loft with a hips to gable conversion with front and rear dormers. I can therefore issue a split decision in this case.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal to convert the loft with a hips to gable conversion with front and rear dormers on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property, Midway, is a two-storey detached house in a suburban residential area. Houses and bungalows or chalet bungalows are arranged in rows along each side of this stretch of North Road, facing it. This variation in dwelling type is diverse in age and design, though most are two-storey houses from around the mid-19th century or newer. Whereas Midway is one of a few remaining older Victorian or Edwardian houses in this area. It includes a plain,

fully hipped main roof with a short ridge line capping simple two-storey elevations, a central chimney stack and a projecting roof gable over a shallow two-storey bay below on one side. It is centrally sited across the plot, towards the road, behind an open front garden bounded by a hedge next to the pavement. The properties either side of it and beyond have similar mostly open front gardens with low walls, fences or hedges that give an appreciable sense of spaciousness. As such, Midway is locally distinctive in the streetscene and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

6. The hips to gable loft conversion with front and rear dormers would, to all intents and purposes, give the appearance of a new roof. While it would have the same pitch as the front and rear hipped roof slopes the vertical end gables would seamlessly extend the plane of each side elevation appreciably upwards and in area. Both roof dormers would stretch across a significant part and proportion of the roof in width and in height from at or near main ridge level to eave level, especially at the rear.
7. This would, therefore, obliterate the integrity and cohesiveness of the fully hipped roof, which would be permanently lost and could no longer be appreciated, so to the chimney stack and the roof over the bay would be notably diminished. It would also add inordinate scale, bulk and mass of built form to all elevations of the house at a high level and significantly reduce spaciousness. The dominant and somewhat disparate overly top-heavy, in essence three-storey form would fundamentally unduly alter the basic shape and form of not just the roof but the house overall.
8. Some dwellings nearby have been extended, altered and adapted to meet living needs and evidently some, or some plots, redeveloped with newer dwellings, including of contemporary design. I sympathise with the objectives of the application in these regards. However, reinforcing existing variety is not a determining factor in this case. While a gabled main roof is not unusual at some dwellings nearby, nor pitched or flat roof dormers including in a front elevation, these parts of the proposal would individually and collectively fail to respect important intrinsic features of Midway so are incompatible and as such significantly detract from its intrinsic value.
9. Furthermore, these visually intrusive changes at an elevated level would be wholly or partly conspicuous in short and longer distance public views from both directions in North Road and opposite, so jar in this streetscene. It would also give a discordant transition and abrupt change in height and bulk in relation to the chalet bungalow on one side of it; as well as with the two-storey house on the other side with very low pitched roof and limited height gables.
10. The absence of greater public visibility, including directly from the rear, and that the site is not in a special designated area, does not mitigate unacceptable innate harm to Midway or its immediate surroundings. Planning conditions could achieve suitable external materials and there is no reason why the proposal could not be high quality in this respect. But even if this included recycling roof slates and using zinc to match the proposed single storey side extension, it would not mitigate the adverse impacts outlined above.
11. I therefore find that the proposal to convert the loft with a hips to gable conversion with front and rear dormers would adversely affect the character and appearance of Midway and the area. Consequently, it does not comply with Policy ENV3 of the New Forest District Local Plan July 2020 or with Policy D1 of

the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2026¹. These policies include that development should contribute positively to local distinctiveness and enhance the character of the locality by creating buildings and places that in design are sympathetic to their context and visually appealing, including in scale, height and appearance and in relation to adjoining buildings, avoid adverse visual intrusion and enhance a sense of place by ensuring that buildings and streets are attractive to look at through good architecture.

Other Matters

12. There were no resident objections, nor did Hythe and Dibden Parish Council object. The appellant considers the roof alterations reflect the Council's pre-application advice, but it is non-binding and the Council made the decision that it did. I have determined the appeal on its individual planning merits.

Conditions

13. The Council suggested two conditions if the appeal was allowed. As well as the standard 3-year time limit for commencing development a condition would be necessary to specify the approved plans in the interests of certainty. Details of materials are in the application form and Design and Access Statement and could be secured as part of the 'approved plans' condition. This would be in the interests of the character and appearance of Midway and the area.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

14. Subject to conditions the proposed removal of the existing side extension, garage and front porch and construction of a single storey side extension and an oak frame open porch would accord with the development plan. However, the proposed hips to gable conversion with front and rear dormers would not accord with the development plan. There are no other material considerations to indicate that the decision in each respect should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan². Consequently, for the reasons given above the appeal partly succeeds.

Robin Buchanan

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions (2)

- 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 and documents and shall include details of materials as also set out in the application form:

1356/P00	Location plan and block plan
1356/P04	Proposed ground floor plan
1356/P06	Proposed elevations
Design and Access Statement	Undated, prepared by Just Extension Plans

¹ Policy D1 was not cited in the Council's reason for refusal in its decision notice but it is relied on in the officer report and is before me in this appeal. The appellant has had an opportunity to consider it.

² Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and Framework paragraph 12.