



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 June 2024

by Laura Cuthbert BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/U1620/W/23/3332606

Affinity Dental Care, 22 Cheltenham Road, Gloucester GL2 0LS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Christy Rush against the decision of Gloucester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/00679/FUL.
 - The development proposed is external lift, two storey rear extension and part loft conversion.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Since the appeal was made, a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 19 December 2023. I have taken the revised Framework into account as part of the determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, including the effect of the proposal on the significance of 24 Cheltenham Road, a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a detached brick built building, currently occupied by a dental practice. The existing building of 22 Cheltenham Road is an imposing structure, and its architectural interest is heavily influenced by its ridgeline and roof shape, which provides legibility and attractiveness to its character and appearance. The eastern roofslope on which the proposed side dormer would be sited is visible as you travel westwards along Cheltenham Road.
5. There is some variation in the form and materials of the buildings in the wider streetscene. However, Nos 22, 24 and 26 Cheltenham Road are a small cluster of buildings from a similar period, which have a satisfying level of coherence, with a comparable traditional character and form, including a projecting gable to the front. These buildings contribute positively towards the character and appearance of the area.
6. Furthermore, the Council has identified 24 Cheltenham Road, the neighbouring property to the east, as a non-designated heritage asset of local significance, due to its age, retained features and aesthetic value. In my view, considering the above and my observations on site, I deem No 24 to have a moderate level of significance. Accordingly, the appeal building, by virtue of its traditional

form, character and siting immediately adjacent to No 24, makes a positive contribution to the setting, and consequently the significance, of the non-designated heritage asset.

7. The proposal, by virtue of the design, scale and siting of the rear and side dormer windows to serve the proposed loft conversion, would sit uncomfortably with the more traditional roof form and ridgeline of the existing building.
8. The 2 dormers would sit either side of the rear gable, almost consuming the integrity and symmetry of the rear facing gable. The rear dormer would cover almost the entirety of the new roof section at the top of the proposed two storey rear extension, with a regular, square section at the side and a diagonal join with the gable end. This uncomfortable juxtaposition and its dominant scale would harm the traditional character and appearance of No 22. Furthermore, whilst it might not be particularly apparent in the streetscene, the manner in which the rear dormer would extend above the ridgeline of No 22 would harm the architectural integrity of the existing building.
9. I understand that the dormer to the side has been reduced in scale from an earlier proposal. However, the proposed side dormer, due to its flat roof design and scale, infilling the majority of the roofslope between the rear gable end and the chimney, would represent a significant and incongruous addition to the prominent side roofslope. It would undermine the primacy of the projecting front and rear gable ends. Notwithstanding the appellant's claim that the side dormer would be shrouded from the street scene by the gable and chimney, it would be visually prominent as you travel west along Cheltenham Road. Its conspicuous siting would exacerbate the overall unharmonious visual impact of the side dormer, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.
10. Whilst public views of the rear dormer would be limited, such visibility is not a prerequisite for harm to occur and does not make up for the inappropriateness of the rear dormer's scale and design. Furthermore, whilst the finishing of the dormer windows in hung tiles assists in incorporating them in to the roofscape, this would not mitigate the harm to the character and appearance identified.
11. Consequently, due to the harm to the traditional character and appearance of No 22 and the wider area, the proposal would result in a building with an uncomfortable and jarring presence immediately adjacent to No 24. In particular, the side dormer would be apparent when No 22 and No 24 are viewed together. This would in turn undermine the setting of No 24 and thereby harming the significance of No 24 as a non-designated heritage asset. I consider that the level of harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset would be substantial.
12. Whilst of a lower status than designated heritage assets, paragraph 209 of the Framework requires that the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account and a balanced judgement should be made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
13. The appellant has submitted a business plan to show how the proposal would help meet the medium and long term objectives of the business, including the provision of an additional surgery for dentistry and oral hygiene therapy, improving DDA Access for 'all persons and abilities', and a bigger staff room. However, whilst the development would provide some moderate economic and

social benefits, these benefits would not be significant enough to outweigh the harm to the significance of a non-designated heritage asset of moderate significance identified above, by virtue of unacceptable development within its setting.

14. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, including harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset of No 24. It would be contrary to Policies SD4 and SD8 of the Joint Core Strategy (2017) and Policies D1, D2 and F1 of the Gloucester City Plan (2023). These policies, in combination, seek to ensure that development affecting a non-designated heritage asset, or its setting, should protect and where appropriate enhance its character, appearance and significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings. They also ensure that developments should make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the locality, enhancing local distinctiveness and having regard to the historic environment. Furthermore, it would fail to comply with the design and historical environment objectives of the Framework.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan as a whole. There are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision otherwise than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Laura Cuthbert

INSPECTOR