



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 October 2024

by C Cresswell BSc (Hons) MA, MBA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D0840/W/24/3342113

Gulls Rest, 52 Gwithian Towans, Gwithian, Cornwall, TR27 5BT

- 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 Mrs F Dunnington against the decision of Cornwall Council.
 - The application Ref is PA23/09681.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement.
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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 area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is within a group of coastal dwellings which are situated outside the main centre of Gwithian. While architectural styles are mixed, many of the properties maintain relatively simple, chalet-style designs in keeping with the coastal setting. Although the dwellings form a relatively dense cluster of development, the wider landscape has a distinct sense of openness and is characterised by dunes, cliffs, sand and expansive views of the sea. This is an especially attractive part of the coastline.
4. At the time of my visit, the original building had been demolished and new foundations were in the process of being laid. The surrounding dwellings vary considerably in size and design. Most properties in the cul-de-sac, including the neighbouring Pendrewn, are modestly sized and take the form of traditional timber chalets with simple pitched roofs. Others, such as Between the Flags, are larger and more elaborate. This includes some dwellings situated behind the appeal site in the adjacent cul-de-sac. However, in most cases, the properties maintain a recognisable simple primary form consistent with the Gwithian Towans Design Guide¹.
5. The proposed new dwelling would feature dormers on both the north and south facing roof slopes. These would have flat roofs which would extend to almost the full ridge height of the dwelling. As the main frontage of the dwelling would face west, the dormers would be seen from a side-on perspective when standing directly outside in the cul-de-sac.

¹ Gwithian Towans Design Guide, Gwinear-Gwithian Parish Council

6. Although the dormers would be set back from the from the road frontage, they would nonetheless have the effect of making the dwelling appear somewhat boxy in shape. In my view, this would not be characteristic of the surrounding pitched-roofed properties in the cul-de-sac. Nor would it maintain a simple, primary form as advocated in the Design Guide. As such, the dwelling would appear somewhat out of keeping in its immediate setting.
7. My attention has been drawn to other examples of dwellings which have been approved by the Council in recent years. Not all of these examples are directly comparable to the appeal proposal as they represent different styles of architecture. That said, I note that No's 47 and 50 have flat roof dormers on their roof slopes. Nonetheless, this is not broadly typical of the properties in the vicinity and so I do not consider these cases establish a convincing precedent for future development. While the proposed dwelling would not be seen from many public vantage points, the character and appearance of the area is also appreciated from the private domain.
8. Although the appellant says that a similar development to that being proposed could be achieved through permitted development rights, this argument is now of less relevance as the original property has been demolished. Of more relevance is the planning permission² for a new dwelling on the site which was recently approved by the Council.
9. This is very similar to the appeal proposal except that it would have one dormer on the north facing roof slope. The dormer would be smaller than that proposed in the current appeal and designed with a pitched roof. Although this is a relatively subtle change, this would have the effect of making the dwelling appear less bulky from the front elevation and would accord more closely with the provisions of the Design Guide. It is therefore a materially different proposal from that before me in the current appeal.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. There would be conflict with Policy 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan³ insofar as the proposal would not accord with the overall principles of the Design Guide. There would also be conflict with Policies 2 and 12 of the Local Plan⁴ which aim to achieve appropriate standards of design.

C Cresswell

INSPECTOR

² Council Ref: PA24/01992

³ Gwinear-Gwithian Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2030

⁴ Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010-2030