



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 November 2024

by H Faulkner BSc (Hons) MSc PGCE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/K1128/W/24/3346019

Heybrook Guest House, Beach Road, Heybrook Bay, PLYMOUTH, PL9 0BS

- 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 Mr Paul Brooks against the decision of South Hams District Council.
 - The application ref is O276/24/FUL.
 - The development proposed is for alterations and extensions together with change of use from guest house to a dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England and Wales became "National Landscapes". The parties refer to the appeal site being within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the AONB) which is now known as the South Devon Landscape (SDNL). However, the legal designation and policy status of the AONB is unchanged and it remains an AONB in both, so I have used both terms where relevant.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect that the proposed extensions would have on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area with particular regard to the impact on the South Devon National Landscape and Undeveloped Coast.

Reasons

4. The existing building is located in a prominent position on the corner of Heybrook Bay and Beach Road. The area includes a mix of architectural styles with examples of new builds and extended properties taking a contemporary form with large areas of glazing. The prevailing mix of materials is render with plain roof tiles in either clay, concrete or slate.
5. The alterations to the property propose the use of metal cladding for the roof. Whilst there are examples of modern architecture in the area, tiles are the consistent roofing material. The use of metal sheeting over what would be a large section of roof which would be prominent in views from Heybrook Drive, Beach Road and Fursehill Road would appear out of character and have a harmful visual impact as a result.

6. In terms of design and materials whilst these can evolve in places over time and there have clearly been architectural changes in the village in recent years, each change needs careful consideration. In this instance the use of metal sheeting for the roof while being similar in colour would appear incongruous with the prevailing building materials.
7. The proposed roof would therefore be contrary to Policies DEV20 and DEV23 if the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 (JLP) which, amongst other things, require developments to positively contribute to townscape and landscape avoiding significant visual impacts.
8. The building in its unaltered form has a number of windows in each elevation and a large glazed conservatory wrapping around part of the front and side. On Beach Road nearly every house has at least one large window or set of double doors. The new dwellings being constructed adjacent also include a significant level of glazing.
9. Given the number of houses in the area with large areas of glazing, the changes to the property would not be inconsistent. However, although the existing building has a large number of windows the size of some of the proposed windows would introduce larger areas of glazing and therefore light spill. The window in the gable of the roof, would have a greater impact than the existing dormers with the increase in the glazing at the highest point in the house. Although there would be light spill from the existing conservatory this is contained to the lower part of the building and therefore has less of an impact.
10. With regards to the east elevation, this is particularly prominent in local views and would have a more noticeable level of light spill where full height doors and windows are proposed.
11. Given the prominent location of the building, particularly when compared to others with similarly large windows, the increase in light spill beyond the existing situation whilst it may not be substantial, would not be limiting the impact of light pollution as required by Policies DEV2, DEV23, DEV24 and DEV25 of the JLP.
12. The Framework directs that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. For these reasons above, I conclude that the proposed development would not conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB or the Undeveloped Coast. As such, it would not comply with Policies DV2, DEV20, DEV23, DEV24 and DEV25 of the JLP, The South Devon Hills Management Plan and the Framework. Those policies seek development within the AONB to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty, including the distinctive landscape character.

Other Matters

13. Examples of other recent approvals have been provided by the appellant. The site adjacent, Pendyce and Greystokes are not directly comparable as neither are as prominently located and have dwellings on at least two sides. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the approved development at the Eddystone Inn is sufficiently comparable to this case.

14. The reuse and modernisation of an existing building and other benefits such as the enhanced sustainability features including solar panels and insulation are noted. However, these do not outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole and there are no other material considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, that outweigh this finding. Therefore, for the reasons given the appeal should be dismissed.

H Faulkner

INSPECTOR