



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2024

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/P1133/D/24/3352118

5 Lower Drive, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 0AT

- 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 & Mrs Petherick against the decision of Teignbridge District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00790/HOU.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with dormers and hip to gable works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for loft conversion with dormers and hip to gable works at 5 Lower Drive, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 0AT, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 24/00790/HOU, dated 15 May 2024 and subject to the conditions listed below.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: S1; PL3; PL4.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in materials to match those on the existing building or otherwise be as shown on the approved plans.

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 Council have referred to policies S1 (Sustainable Development Criteria), S2 (Quality Development) and WE8 (Domestic Extensions, Ancillary Domestic Curtilage Buildings & Boundary Treatments) of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013 – 2033 (May 2014) (TLP). These policies seek, amongst other requirements, to ensure that new development is of a high quality design, demonstrates its compatibility with local character, that the design and materials are complementary to the existing building, that the scale is appropriate and does not overdevelop the site or have a dominant and overbearing impact on the streetscene.

4. These TLP policies pre-date those in the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (NPPF). However, a broadly similar approach is set out in paragraph 135 of the NPPF but it differs in that it also states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change. The National Design Guide (NDG) (January 2021) reinforces the Framework, for example, at paragraph 44 by emphasising that well designed places do not need to copy their surroundings and that it is appropriate for new development to include innovation and change to reflect how we live today.
5. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF also states that development that is not well designed should be refused especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design (including the NDG) taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents (SPD), such as design guides. My attention has not been drawn to any local design guide or similar SPD's.
6. Dealing firstly with the proposed rear hip to gable extension, the Council's reason for refusal does not refer to these works or suggest that they would result in any harm. That appears to be consistent with their Delegated Report which states that as this element is located at the rear of the host property it would not be visible from public view. Hip to gable extensions are a common and accepted way of providing additional headroom within loft conversions. In this particular case, whilst the extension would result in an increase in the bulk and massing of the rear roof, this increase would, in my view, be acceptable and would not be harmful to the host property or to the streetscene.
7. Turning to the proposed dormers, these would be positioned on either side of the main roof to the host (as extended). They would be set well back from the frontage of the host and its two storey gabled bay window. Whilst you would normally expect the ridge height to the new dormers to be set below that of the existing roof, the proposal shows the ridge heights to match existing. This appears to be due to the need to achieve the appropriate headroom within the loft accommodation. Even so, the proposed dormers would be sited centrally within the roof and well in from its sides (as extended). The dormers would sit well above the eaves, constructed from a pallet of materials to match existing and with a good quality pitched roof gable design. Each dormer would also have a central window that would broadly align with those below.
8. For the above reasons and notwithstanding the alignment of the ridge, I am satisfied that the proposed dormers would be sympathetic to the design of the host property (as extended). They would integrate well with the proposed hip to gable extension and the existing two storey front gable design, without being visually intrusive. I accept that there would be a material change to the appearance of the front elevation to the main roof, but, even so, the proposed dormers would, in my view, be proportional to and in keeping with the design of the host property.
9. The surrounding area includes a mixture of property styles, including single storey bungalows and two storey properties. These properties roof forms also vary and whilst there are a number of hipped roofs there are also examples of more traditional pitched roofs as well as gable ends. There is, therefore, no uniform roofscape with the roof form of the host already different to that of its immediate neighbours. In view of this, the proposed dormers would not, in my

view, introduce a discordant feature and they would not visually dominate the host or the streetscene. Overall, I am satisfied that the impact of the proposed dormers on the streetscene would be modest, that they would sit reasonably comfortably on the appeal site, be visually well designed and contained within the roofscape (as extended).

10. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the host property or the surrounding area and would thus accord with policies S1, S2 and WE8 of the TLP, as well as the corresponding policies of the NPPF.

Conditions

11. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions against the advice in the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance chapter on the 'Use of planning conditions'. The conditions are all standard in requiring compliance with the submitted plans and for materials to match existing or be as shown on the approved plans, which are both necessary and reasonable in order to secure a high quality development.

Conclusion

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

G Roberts

INSPECTOR