



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 February 2025

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/D/24/3356105

5 Castle Road, Portland DT5 1AU

- 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 Miss Tessler against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref. is P/HOU/2024/03494
 - The development proposed is the formation of a front dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the host building, the setting of the nearby listed buildings and the significance of the designated Underhill Conservation Area ('the CA').

Reasons

3. The appeal dwelling is one half of a semi-detached pair of for the most part matching properties in an elevated position along Castle Road with extensive westerly views from the front windows over a recreation area and towards Chesil Beach. With its frontage close to the back of the pavement, the property is prominent in the street scene where it is read as part of a group of other stone built houses of a similar age (early C20th).
4. The Officers Report on the application explains that although not a listed building, No. 5 is located within the CA and is identified as an 'Important Local Building' within the CA's formal appraisal. The building was built as police accommodation and is part of the setting of the listed former police station.
5. The proposed dormer would be a of a flat roof box style design set just above about half of the eaves length and extending to the apex of the roof. The pair of full height glazed doors would open inwards with the opening safeguarded by a Juliette balcony. The submitted plans annotate the floorspace created by the dormer as a 'viewing gallery' and I can readily understand, with the outstanding views from this elevated position, why the appellant would wish to propose this alteration to the building.
6. However, with its rectilinear form, large size and fully glazed frontage the proposed dormer would draw the eye as an unduly dominant feature wholly out of keeping with the traditional design and character of the host building, all the more so because as an alteration to a semi-detached property it would

- unbalance the pair. I therefore agree with the Council's assessment that the proposed dormer would result in 'an incongruous and alien feature at odds with the traditional building and the neighbouring terrace of traditional buildings'.
7. Furthermore, although the dormer would be prominent in the street scene of Castle Road, because of the open aspect of the recreation area on the hillside to the west the harm caused would be exacerbated by the inappropriate appearance of the building from other vantage points in this part of Portland. I acknowledge that there are other dormers in this part of Portland but these are neither in the immediate vicinity of the appeal property, nor on buildings of a similar age, appearance and character to No. 5.
 8. Overall, I find that the proposed dormer would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building, the setting of the nearby listed buildings and the significance of the CA. As such, the proposal would conflict with Policies ENV10 and ENV12 of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015 and with Government policy in Section 16: 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' of the National Planning Policy Framework, revised in December 2024.
 9. Paragraph 215 of this document says that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage assets (in this case the listed buildings and the CA) this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. And although 'less than substantial' the harm caused by the proposed dormer is nonetheless such as to warrant the Council's refusal of the application, whilst in my view in this instance there would be no public benefit.
 10. For the above reasons, the appeal fails.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR