



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 May 2025

by S. Hartley BA (Hons) Dist.TP (Manc) DMS MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/W/25/3362297

171 Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Staffordshire, WS6 6NL

- 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. Sangha (Birchwood Dental Surgery) against the decision of South Staffordshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00522/FUL
 - The development proposed is the conversion and extension of the existing roof space at the dental surgery to create additional rooms at second floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in December 2024 and amended on 7 February 2025 to correct cross references from footnotes 7 and 8, and to amend the end of the first sentence of paragraph 155 to make its intent clear. The 2025 Framework (the Framework) has not materially changed in terms of the identified main issues below and therefore, it has not been necessary for me to seek comments from the main parties.
3. The appellant describes the proposed development as a loft conversion. I have used the description of the local planning authority (LPA) in the banner heading as it more fully describes the proposed development .

The Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the building and the area.

Reasons

5. The Dental Practice is a brick built, two-storey property in a line of comparably sized, mainly residential properties, predominantly with hipped roofs and set back from Walsall Road. In the case of the appeal property, the front space is given over to a number of parking spaces associated with the Practice.
6. While there are some minor variations to ridge heights, these do not detract significantly from the overall design and appearance of the row provided by the hipped, unbroken roofs when seen from Walsall Road and which add distinctively and positively to the character and appearance of the building and the area.

7. The proposed development is to replace the hipped roof with straight gables, (without raising the ridge height), to introduce pitched dormers to the front elevation and a box dormer along the full extent of the rear elevation. This would allow additional administrative and related space to be used in connection with the existing treatment rooms.
8. The appellant considers that such additional facilities are needed to improve services to clients and to maintain the viability of the Practice.
9. However, while I give considerable weight to the need for the extra room, this would not outweigh the harm to the general unity of design to the building itself and to the row of properties which would be caused by the change from a hipped roof to straight gables. Moreover, the introduction of gables, and especially by the rear box gable along the rear elevation, would create an unsatisfactory top-heavy appearance.
10. The appellant has referred to a site opposite, stating that what was once a single-storey building is now a three-storey care home. However, the character and appearance of the appeal building is more obviously viewed in the context of the group of linear buildings immediately around it rather than by development on the far side of Walsall Road.
11. As the LPA considers that extensions and alterations to buildings are generally an acceptable form of development in the area, and while I have no other plans before me, it might be possible for the main parties to consider alternative ways of meeting the needs of the Practice within its curtilage.
12. Therefore, I conclude that the proposed development would not accord with policy EQ11 of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2012) which requires development to respect local character and distinctiveness, or with the South Staffordshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2018) and chapter 12 of the Framework, both of which require development to add positively to the street scene within which it is to take place, including roofscapes.

Other Matters

13. The appellant notes that there are no objections in terms of highway matters, ecology or the impact upon residential amenities. However, these are neutral matters in the decision-making process

Conclusion

14. There are no material planning considerations that indicate that the application should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

S. Hartley

INSPECTOR