



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 June 2025

by **D R Kay BA Dip.Arch RIBA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/D/25/3363531

Foxglove Cottage, High Street, Ogbourne St George, Wiltshire SN8 1SU

- 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 Paul Leader against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2024/09417.
 - The development proposed is Loft conversion with dormer window. Resubmission of rear fenestration alterations.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application drawings have been subject to amendment during the design process. Section B-B on drawing number 1455-03 has not been amended to match the plans and elevations contained in drawing number 1455-02 Rev C. For the purposes of the appeal, I have determined the appeal based on the extent of dormer identified in plans and elevations on drawing number 1455-02 Rev C.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Ogbourne St George Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. Foxglove Cottage is a detached bungalow with a room within the roof space, the roof has a mix of hipped and gabled forms, the room being currently served by two sloping roof windows and a rear gable window. The property is situated at the western end of High Street, at the heart of the CA.
5. The significance of the CA is partly derived from the design quality of its historic and vernacular buildings, which are either located close to the highway, or set back by some distance. Properties are generally elevated to the highway, and with a mix of heavily vegetated frontages which physically conceal the buildings, with fleeting glimpses through driveway entrances, resulting in a verdant rural historic village character.
6. The property occupies a raised setting some distance back from the highway and constitutes modern backland development behind, and likely within the historic grounds of, the historic property known as Kingscot. The appeal dwelling has a detached, pitched and gable roofed garage block that sits in front of the property,

partially obscuring views of the dwelling from the highway. Its presence is further tempered by its limited scale and simple roof profile. It therefore makes a neutral contribution to the significance of the CA.

7. Whilst the materials proposed would reflect those of the existing dwelling, the introduction of an incongruous, box-like dormer to the side elevation would imbalance the main roof, resulting in harm to the design of Foxglove Cottage. The small sloping parapet to the sides of the dormer to soften its design, would appear contrived. The appellant has stated that the dormer would be obscured from view by the garage in front of the property, and in certain views I find this would be the case. However, there would be views from the public highway, in front of Kingscot. The significance of the CA would therefore be harmed.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to the presence of a flat roof at the rear of the Kingscot property, in justification of the flat roofed dormer. However, I find this flat roof to be detrimental to the appearance of Kingscot, and consequently, it does not set a positive design precedent.
9. The Wiltshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) expands on policy CP57 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) (Local Plan). With regards to dormers, it notes that their design should reflect the style, proportion, materials and shape of the existing house and roof design and should only be designed to provide light to existing spaces and not as an opportunity to create an enlarged floor area. I find the proposal does not reflect this guidance and would therefore be contrary to the SPD.
10. Whilst I have found harm to the CA, I would assess this as being 'less than substantial harm'. Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires this harm to be weighed against any public benefits of the development. Here that balancing exercise must take place in the context of s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended), which sets a strong presumption against a grant of permission for development that would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area. Beyond a modest improvement to the internal space within Foxglove Cottage, I find limited evidence of public benefit that would outweigh the harm that I have found to the CA.
11. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the CA. It follows therefore, that the proposal would be contrary to policies CP57 and CP58 of the Local Plan, and with the SPD, which require, among other things, development to deliver a high standard of design which enhances local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the historic environment, and which conserves and enhances the historic environment.

Other Matters

12. The 17th century Grade II* listed building known as 'Applegarth' is located immediately opposite the entrance to the appeal site. It is screened at street level by a tall mature yew hedge, though views of its coursed flint, stone and brickwork detailed walls and thatched roof which contribute much to its historic significance, are visible from the public realm through its entrance gates, when open.

13. Whilst there are clear views of Applegarth's upper windows and thatched roof visible from in front of the appeal property's garage, which demonstrates inter-visibility with the appeal proposal from the upper floor of Applegarth, I find the proposal would not harm the setting of 'Applegarth' due to the significant separation distance between properties, and the lack of viewpoints where the two properties would be seen together within the same views.
14. The appeal site is within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (NL). Section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) amended the duty placed on relevant authorities required by the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act), requiring decision makers to 'seek to further' the statutory purposes of protected landscapes, of which the NL is one. It requires, as far as is reasonably practical, relevant authorities to seek to avoid harm and to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes. This is reflected in the Framework, which requires great weight to be given to protecting the scenic beauty of NL's.
15. However, due to the location of the appeal development within the centre of the village, within a group of other residential dwellings and with significant woodland to its periphery which screens the appeal development from wider landscape views, I judge the appeal development would not have a detrimental effect on the scenic beauty of the wider NL.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal proposal would be contrary to the development plan as a whole, and that there are no material considerations, including policies in the Framework, that would justify determining other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

D R Kay

INSPECTOR