

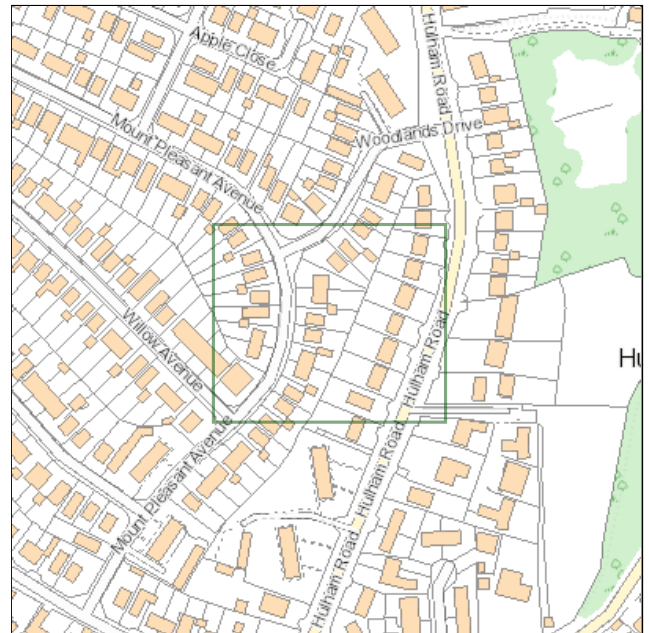
Ward Exmouth Halsdon

Reference 20/2585/FUL

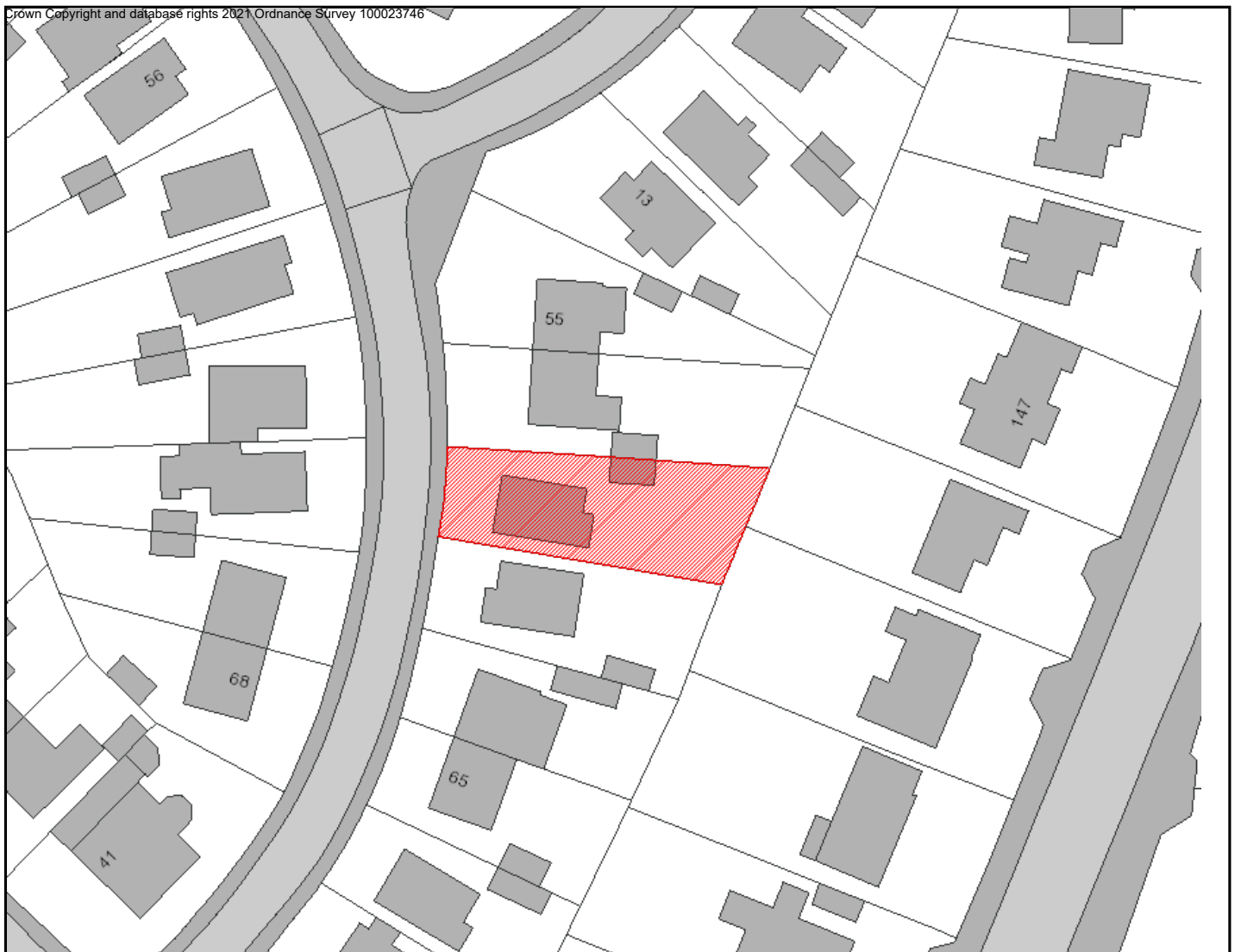
Applicant Mr Mark Philp

Location 59 Mount Pleasant Avenue Exmouth EX8 4QR

Proposal Front and rear hip to gable extension with side dormer to form new first floor living space and associated works



RECOMMENDATION: Refusal



		Committee Date: 10th February 2021
Exmouth Halsdon (Exmouth)	20/2585/FUL	Target Date: 15.01.2021
Applicant:	Mr Mark Philp	
Location:	59 Mount Pleasant Avenue Exmouth	
Proposal:	Front and rear hip to gable extension with side dormer to form new first floor living space and associated works	

RECOMMENDATION: Refusal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This application has been deferred from Chair's Delegation for consideration of the relevant matters.

Permission is sought to add a hip to gable extension to the front and rear of the existing bungalow, along with a large side dormer window to enable conversion of the roof space to provide additional living accommodation.

This application is a resubmission of a previously refused application with the subsequent appeal dismissed on the grounds of the significant visual harm to the streetscene.

The changes proposed as part of the application are not considered to overcome the Planning Inspector's reasons for dismissing the appeal and the Officer view is that whilst there would be a small benefit arising to the applicant from the creation of the additional living accommodation (enabling the family to remain in the existing premises in an area with few large families), this benefit does not outweigh the harm to the building and streetscene from the scale of the alterations.

In light of the continued harm to the streetscene and previous Inspector's findings, the application is again recommended for refusal.

CONSULTATIONS

Local Consultations

Exmouth Halsdon - Cllr Paul Millar

Policy H1 of Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan on p73 which states that there needs to be a 'balanced housing stick for a range of age groups within the town'. The key objective highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Chapter is that 'priority should be given to developments which can be easily adapted for life long accommodation'.

This adaptation would also support Strategy 4c of the East Devon Local Plan which emphasises the importance of 'Balanced Communities' and 'getting more age-balanced communities'. The Strategy states that, 'Many East Devon communities have an overtly aged population profile. Where this is the case we will encourage residential development that will be suited to or provide for younger people and younger families'. Mount Pleasant Avenue is an example of a community with an overtly-aged population profile. Conversations with neighbours confirms that the presence of younger families in the areas improves social and community cohesion, with older residents acting as babysitters for younger families before the pandemic, and younger families supporting older residents during the pandemic with shopping.

This pandemic has highlighted the importance of Strategy 4 and therefore despite previous officer recommendations, I am therefore minded to SUPPORT this application. I do so with consideration of previous officer concerns that the extension is overbearing or 'out of character' of the area. I consider that on this application on the information I have thus far they are outweighed by Strategy 4 of the Local Plan and Policy H1 of the Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan.

However, I reserve the right to change my view subject to further comments from neighbours, other consultees and the professional view of Planning Officers.

Parish/Town Council

Meeting 07.12.20

No objection

Technical Consultations

None received

Other Representations

One third party comment received in support advising that it would be a shame if the applicants, who require more space for their family, had to move and they would be missed in the community.

POLICIES

Exmouth Neighbourhood Plan (Made)

Policy H1
Policy EB2

Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 Policies

Strategy 4 (Balanced Communities)

D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness)

Relevant Planning History

A previous application (19/0646/FUL) for almost identical development) was refused by the Local Planning Authority for the following reason:

The proposal by reason of the scale of the side dormer window would result in a building with a top heavy appearance which would not relate to or reflect the general appearance of existing dwellings close by, over developing the building and site, which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the street contrary to Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031).

The application was subsequently dismissed on appeal with the Inspector in summary stating 'the enlargement of the roof would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area'.

Following this Appeal decision the applicant was provided with advice from officers on how to overcome the concerns raised. The advice was to retain the hipped roof to the front of the property to reduce the visual impact. This would result in a less bulky visual impact to the streetscene as the gable end would be removed with a slightly smaller dormer proposed, although it is acknowledged that this would result in less usable space within the roof.

Site Location and Description

The property is a bungalow similar to others nearby in a residential area of the town. There are no particular constraints covering the site. The building is constructed of brick and render with a clay tile roof.

Proposed Development

The application seeks to add a front and rear hip to gable extension with side dormer to form new first floor living space which is not dissimilar to the previously considered application, the difference being the front hip to gable extension has now been set back slightly from the existing front wall. The previous scheme extended to the front wall. The dormer is of the same size as previously considered and the extensions would result in the provision of 3 bedrooms (1 en-suite) and bathroom in the roof and 1 bedroom, snug, kitchen, dining room and living room at ground floor.

ANALYSIS

The main issues for consideration are the impact upon the amenity of neighbours, the suitability of the design and whether there are any other matters that weigh in favour of the proposal.

Amenity

As considered with the previous application, there are no significant amenity concerns arising. When dealing with the appeal the Inspector did not identify any harm to neighbours either of an overbearing or loss of privacy nature in the appeal decision.

Design

In the previous appeal the Inspector discussed other properties locally that had benefited from the addition of dormer windows, comparing their smaller scale to that proposed at No 59, and their (other sites) position 'well contained within their roof slopes'..... or 'set back from the road, so are not prominent'.

Whilst this scheme differs slightly in the set back of the front hip to gable, it is not considered that this difference between this design and that previously refused and dismissed would address the harm identified in the Inspector's decision. The dormer window still travels the length of the roof slope so that it could not be considered to be well contained, and it would remain conspicuous when viewed from the street.

In relation to the design and visual impact, the Inspector stated the following in dismissing the appeal:

'While the proposed dormer would be set in somewhat from the ridge, proposed gable ends and eaves, it would occupy nearly all of the enlarged side roof slope. Although the materials used would be appropriate in this context, the dormer would be unduly dominant and overscaled in relation to the host property. It would be highly visible from the road due to its size, position and the rising land levels and would harm the contribution of the host property to the street scene.'

'The proposed enlarged roof and dormer would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. They would conflict with policy D1 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 (2016) which, amongst other things, requires development to be of high quality design, respect the key characteristics of the area and ensure that the scale of proposals relates well to their context.'

'While I have found that the proposed changes to doors and windows would be of neutral effect, the enlargement of the roof would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The door and window changes are part and parcel of the proposal to provide roof accommodation and as such I cannot separate them. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.'

The applicant has confirmed that the only change is to the set back of the front hip to gable referencing development at No 51 Mount Pleasant. However there is no such address within the street. An application was considered at No 50 Mount Pleasant - 20/0745/FUL - which was not dissimilar in appearance and format. However following discussions with officers and the applicant's agent this application was withdrawn as a similar concern was raised about extending the existing hip to a gable and no decision was made.

The applicant has provided a planning statement which includes examples of development carried out nearby.

Referring to each one in turn in summary, that for No 49 included a hip to gable extension as opposed to a dormer in this case and the harm identified in the reason for refusal and Inspector's decision for No 59 on the previous application was for the scale of dormer window not the hip to gable specifically although it is acknowledged to play its part as it allows the extent and scale of the dormer proposed; examples looking up Mount Pleasant referred to are much smaller dormer windows well contained within their roof slopes; that at Roundhouse Lane is set well off the public highway as is the example at the end of Hill Drive. That at No 20 Hill appears to have been permitted development but again is of smaller scale.

The example provided of No 9 Littlemead Lane was approved at Committee overturning the officer's recommendation for refusal. That said whilst acknowledging the scale of the front dormer it is more contained within the surrounding roof slope in comparison to the proposal at No 59 which extends down to the eaves level.

In addition, in relation to other roof extensions in the area, the Inspector considered this as follows:

'My attention has been drawn to a number of other properties in the area which have dormers or a gable end and balcony. I do not have details of the particular circumstances which led to those examples being built. Of those that have been constructed, 2 of the properties are in Mount Pleasant Avenue; these have front dormers which are substantially smaller than the appeal proposal and are well contained within their roof slopes. Another 4 of the properties are in nearby streets; these have dormers which are either significantly smaller than the proposal before me or, in the case of 25 Hill Drive, are sizeable but located at the end of a cul-de-sac where public views of it are limited. The gable and balcony are located in a mixed street scene and set back from the road, so are not prominent. Consequently, none are comparable in scale and prominence to the appeal proposal, which I have considered on its own merits. Therefore, while there are various other dormers in the local area, they have not altered the character of the area to such an extent that the appeal proposal would appear any less incongruous.'

Therefore it is not considered these examples are directly comparable and this application should be considered on its own merits.

When considered on its merits, given the very small change from the previous scheme and Inspectors comments, the design of the changes are considered to be unacceptable with significant harm to the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policy D1 of the Local Plan.

Other considerations

In regard to the comments of the Ward Member referring to Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Policy H1 and Local Plan Strategy 4 - provision of balanced housing stock and communities respectfully - whilst it is acknowledged that the additional space would provide further accommodation for the applicants, and no significant harm to the

amenity of neighbours has been identified, it is not considered that this small benefit would outweigh the harm identified in terms of design identified by the Inspector.

Policy H1 is within the section on Housing within the NP and there is a separate policy EB2 covering development within the built environment elsewhere which seems more appropriate; similarly Strategy 4 is within the overarching Spatial Strategy section of the Local Plan and extensions to homes are covered specifically within Policy D1 of the Local Plan. Therefore it is considered it is not clear that either NP Policy H1 or Strategy 4 were formed specifically to apply to house extensions when there are other more specific policies available elsewhere in the respective plans.

Whilst this matter of support was not raised previously, the Ward Member not being in post at the time of the previous application, the Inspector also took into account the provision of the further accommodation to benefit the applicants. Both these Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies were in place at the time of the previous appeal and whilst not referring to them specifically in their decision notice the Inspector considered assessed the matter as follows:

'I recognise that the proposal would create additional space to meet the family's needs without compromising the outdoor space. I have carefully considered the appellant's circumstances however this would be a private benefit and does not justify the significant harm identified.'

Whilst the case put forward by the Ward Member with regard to the benefit of the wider area from allowing a family to remain and provide a more balanced and mixed community, this benefit is minimal given that it only relates to a single dwelling and is not considered to outweigh the significant harm identified to the streetscene.

Therefore taking into account the relatively modest change from the previous scheme and acknowledging the harm identified in the Inspector's decision, the application is again recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1. The proposal by reason of the scale of the side dormer window would result in a building with a top heavy appearance which would not relate to or reflect the general appearance of existing dwellings close by, over developing the building and site, which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the street contrary to Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) of the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031).

NOTE FOR APPLICANT

Informative:

In accordance with the aims of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 East Devon District Council seeks to work positively with applicants to try and ensure that all relevant planning concerns have been appropriately resolved; however, in this case the

development is considered to be fundamentally unacceptable such that the Council's concerns could not be overcome through negotiation.

Informative: Confirmation - No CIL Liability

This Informative confirms that this development is not liable to a CIL charge.

Any queries regarding CIL, please telephone 01395 571585 or email cil@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Plans relating to this application:

190014.PHILPS. 01SV	Location Plan	20.11.20
190014.PHILP.0 4PP	Proposed Combined Plans	20.11.20

List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.