

EXMOUTH
(Exmouth town)

06/1696/FUL
(FULL)

14.08.06

Applicant:

A & T Dyer

Location:

44B Imperial Road
(Grid Ref: 299931/80696)

Proposal:

Subdivide existing dwellings to create two flats

Consultations

County Highway Authority

Comments not received at time of writing (It is hoped these can be delivered verbally at Committee)

Environment Agency

No comments

South West Water

No comments received

Planning History

No relevant History

Town/Parish Council

Objection on the grounds of over-intensification of the site and would create little or no amenities for future occupants.

Representations

2 letters of representation have been received (one from the Exmouth Society).

Summary of points raised:

1. Existing right of way exists over site to neighbouring property
2. Loss of parking provision.

Location

The application site relates to a modest two storey, end terrace property located within a short terrace of three properties. It features red brick elevations and a reconstituted slate roof. The property is located set back from the west side of Imperial Road, opposite Manor gardens (a public park). The neighbouring properties to the north are older and feature a higher ridge height, rendered elevations and similar roofing materials. There is a small enclosed yard area to the rear of the property and at the front a hard surfaced area leading to the existing garage and front entrance porch.

The Proposed Development

The proposal seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the existing dwelling house to two flats. The property would be divided horizontally with a flat created on each of the ground and first floors. The external works of alteration and extension proposed relate to the infilling of the garage door and the erection of a porch forward of this and also the repositioning of the door to the existing porch from the side to the front elevation.

Planning Policy

Adopted East Devon Local Plan

- D1 Design and Local Distinctiveness.
- S3 Development within Built-up Area Boundaries
- H6 Conversion of Existing Dwellings and Other Buildings to Flats

Devon Structure Plan (2001 - 2016)

- C06 Quality of New Development

Observations

It is considered that the main issues in the determination of the application are the design of the proposed alterations, the effect of the intensification in use of the site on the character of the surrounding area and the highway safety implications.

It is not considered that the proposal would have any adverse impact on the privacy or amenity of neighbouring occupiers. At first floor level the windows overlooking the rear garden areas of properties in Alexandra Terrace would serve a kitchen and bathroom as opposed to the current two bedrooms, and it is not considered that the level of overlooking would significantly increase. The neighbour at no. 44A has drawn the Council's attention to a right of way that they possess over the site, but this is a legal matter and not a planning consideration, (although there are no works proposed that would physically prohibit this access). The same neighbour has also referred to a clause preventing the insertion of any windows within the ground floor elevations of the property facing their private rear yard. Again this is a private legal matter but no such windows are proposed and if permission were granted for the proposal any future windows would require planning permission as flats do not benefit from permitted development rights.

In terms of design the external alterations proposed are considered to be relatively minor and relate primarily to the infilling of the existing garage door and the erection of an additional porch to serve the proposed ground floor flat. This would be similar in appearance to the redesigned existing porch and would utilise materials to match.

The Town Council has objected on the basis that the proposal would result in an over-intensive use of the site and provide little amenities for potential residents. In the first regard, the proposal would provide a one bedroom flat and a two bedroom flat; given the prevalence of other flats in the area and the proximity to the town centre, the proposal is not considered to represent an over intensive use of the site or be out of character with the surrounding area. In the second regard, the amenity area for future occupiers would be extremely limited, however, the proposals are for flats where the expectation for amenity space is lower. Furthermore the proposal site is directly opposite a public park and in close proximity to the beach.

The location of the property in an existing area of dense residential character leads to the consideration that the intensification in the use of the site is acceptable.

In terms of car parking provision the number of existing flats and houses in multiple occupation in the vicinity is also an important consideration. This because it sets a precedent for allowing such development & significant harm would need to be caused by allowing an additional property. While there is no on site parking provision, parking does exist on-street nearby and the property is located in reasonably close proximity to the town centre and would allow any non-car owners to have reasonable access to a variety of transport. Therefore, whilst the concerns of the town council are noted, in consideration of existing uses in the vicinity and previous views taken on similar developments by the Council it is considered that it would be unreasonable to refuse planning permission on this basis.

In conclusion the proposal would result in very minor external alterations and extensions to the property. Although there would be intensification in the use of the site, with the conversion to two flats, it is not considered that this would adversely impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In terms of intensification and decrease in parking provision the proximity of the site to the town centre leads to the consideration that the resulting use and lack of parking provision would not be out of character with the surrounding area.

Recommendation

Approve subject to the following condition:

1. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match, in type, colour and texture those of the existing building.
(Reason - To ensure that the materials are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the existing building.)

List of Background Papers

The file containing all letters, consultations and documents referred to in the report.