
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2016

by Debbie Moore BSc (HONS) MCD MRTPI PGDip

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 31st October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/D/16/3156946
16 Eldon Avenue, Barton-On-Sea BH25 7LL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Selby against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/10728, dated 24 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "conversion of the loft, and extensions and alterations to the existing dwellinghouse".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a detached bungalow. The proposed development would create a larger dwelling, with a higher ridge height and accommodation in the roofspace served by glazed dormer windows to the front and rear.
 4. The bungalow is located on a pleasant residential road that is described in the Council's New Milton Local Distinctiveness: Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (adopted June 2010) as a distinctive residential area of hip roofed bungalows, wide streets with verges and front gardens. The key defining elements are "consistency of street rhythms, building lines, gaps between buildings, eaves heights and roof forms in bungalow areas – predominantly uninterrupted hipped simple roofs and building forms".
 5. The re-developed bungalow would be of a larger scale than others in the area due to its greater width and ridge height. This would increase the prominence of the dwelling and it would be conspicuous in the street scene. A particularly outstanding feature would be the relatively large front dormer window which would project forwards of the hipped roof and would include a substantial area of glazing. The modern design of the dormer would stand out as an uncharacteristic feature. Also, the extended roof would be covered with grey slate with timber cladding which would be in contrast to the traditional use of brick and render, typical of the area.
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6. I appreciate that the estate has evolved over time and many properties have been extended to the side or rear, and some have modest dormer windows. Nonetheless, these extensions are, in the main, sympathetic to the established character and appearance in terms of scale, design and materials. The neighbouring property at No 18 has been altered and extended but the resulting dwelling complements the street scene. Similarly, No 16 has a rear extension but this is not prominent in the street scene. I also looked at No 2 Eldon Close during my site visit, which has a significant roof alteration. Although this development is less sympathetic than others, the site is a corner plot with the gable facing towards Eldon Avenue. Consequently the development has a limited effect on the strong rhythm to the appearance of the street scene.
7. I believe that planning permission was granted in February 2010 for roof alterations and a dormer window to the appeal property. There is no evidence that the permission can still be implemented and consequently, I give limited weight to it as a fall-back position. Whilst that proposal appears to have been determined against the same policies as are currently in place, I do not consider that this justifies a further uncharacteristic scheme.
8. The appellant refers to the permitted development right and states that this would allow a larger side extension than is proposed. As explained above, there are several examples of side extensions along Eldon Avenue which are appropriate in terms of their size, scale and materials. The appeal proposal includes a significant alteration to the overall scale of the dwelling which, when combined with the roof extension and choice of materials, would not complement the character and appearance of the area.
9. I do not have the full appeal decision at Wavendon Avenue, part of which is quoted by the appellant, so I am unable to compare this scheme with that before me. In any event, each application or appeal must be determined on the basis on its own site specific characteristics.
10. I have considered the information provided in respect of an appeal at Heathy Close. This differs from the appeal proposal in that the roof form to the front elevation would be hipped and would be consistent with the street scene in that regard. Further, the Inspector was not persuaded that the slightly higher ridge height would be overly perceived within the street scene. In contrast, the appeal proposed includes alterations to the width and height of the original property, a large front dormer and the use of contemporary materials. The overall effect would not only be perceived in the street scene but would also be harmful.
11. I appreciate that the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. The local distinctiveness of the area is effectively described in the Council's SPD and the proposal would be out of character with the established pattern of development.
12. I have taken into account the appellant's desire to improve their home, but this does not override the conflict with planning policy.

Conclusion

13. I conclude that the development would be visually intrusive and would be detrimental to the established character and appearance of the area. Therefore it would not meet the aims of Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy¹, which seeks to ensure new development contributes positively to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of [in particular] scale, height, appearance and materials. The development would not meet the aims of the Framework insofar as it seeks to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Debbie Moore

Inspector

¹ New Forest District Council Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (adopted October 2009)