
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2017

by Mike Fox BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 February 2017.

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/D/16/3164806

54 Queens Park West Drive, Bournemouth, BH8 9DD

- 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 M Simpkins against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2016-7520-O, dated 24 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension over garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr and Mrs M Simpkins against Bournemouth Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Procedural matter

3. The Appellant has requested an Inspector's view in relation to an earlier set of proposed floor plans and elevations. However, I am limited in my remit to addressing the appeal proposal before me.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached chalet bungalow located on the western side of Queens Park West Drive. It is set in a sizeable, well landscaped plot, within an area comprising similar properties, some of which are two storeys. There is a long woodland frontage on the opposite side of Queens Park West Drive which faces the appeal property. The openness around the detached residential properties and the presence of many mature trees alongside the road are key elements in the area's attractive character and appearance. Its open character is strongly reinforced by the generous spacing between the dwellings, especially at first floor level. The gap between the appeal property and the next door dwelling at no.52, to the south, is approximately 5m, which is typical of the separation distances in the area.

Character and appearance

6. The Appellants maintain that the scale of the proposed extension would be significantly less than the overall cubic content of the existing chalet bungalow and thus would constitute an acceptable, proportionate extension without adding excessive bulk.
7. Whilst I do not disagree with the Appellants regarding the overall scale of the proposed first floor extension, it would significantly alter the shape and profile of the host property in its principal elevation facing the public realm. In particular, the extension would not appear subservient to the host property, both in its roof height, which would equal that of the existing building, and in its lack of any setback from the host dwelling, as it extends the garage - and thereby the extension - level with the existing building line. The front of the extension would appear bulky in relation to the host dwelling. I therefore disagree with the Appellants' view that the proposal would appear subservient to the host building.
8. These aspects of the proposal are contrary to the Council's Design Guide¹, which stresses that "*it is necessary to set the roof ridge of any extension down from the ridge of the existing building and where new walls meet the existing walls, a setback should be introduced*". The Guide also states that side extensions should allow at least 1m off the side boundary of the property in order to keep the openness of the streetscene.
9. On the basis of these considerations, I conclude on the first main issue that the proposed development would fail to respect the integrity of the existing building; that it would erode part of the existing gap between the appeal property and no. 52, resulting in loss of openness; and that it would be alien to the character and appearance of the streetscene. As such the proposal would be contrary to section 7 of *the Framework*² which promotes good design and policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Core Strategy, which seeks to ensure that all development and spaces are well designed and of a high quality. Paragraph 4.6.16 of the explanatory text links this policy to the Council's Design Guide, stating that it acts: "*as best practice guidance and (to) assist in interpreting local and national policies*".

Living conditions

10. The outlook experienced by the occupiers of the detached house immediately to the south, at no.52, is already affected by being set back by almost 5m from the building line of the appeal property. The extension would increase the height of the appeal dwelling, at close quarters to no.52, to a height of about 7.2m. I consider that this combination of added height and proximity would be overbearing on the outlook from the habitable windows in the flank wall facing the appeal property. I note the Appellants' comment that there is no right to a view, but outlook is a material planning consideration, and for the reasons stated I consider that the outlook currently experienced by the occupiers of no. 52 would be harmed by the proposal.
11. The impact of the extension would be significantly less in relation to the next door property at no. 56 to the north. The occupiers of this dwelling would be

¹ Bournemouth Borough Council: Residential Extensions Design Guide for Householders Planning Guidance Note; September 2008.

² DCLG: National Planning Policy Framework (*the Framework*); March 2012.

shielded from any loss of outlook from the proposed extension by the existing building. I therefore consider that the living conditions of these occupiers would not be adversely affected by the proposed development.

12. Taking the above considerations into account, I conclude on the second main issue that the proposed development would harm the living conditions of the occupiers of no. 52, regarding to outlook. This would be contrary to core principle 17 [4] of *the Framework*, which requires that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity (living conditions) for all existing and future occupants of land or buildings. It would also be contrary to policy CS41 and the aims of the Council's Design Guide.

Conclusion

13. I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the appeal property and the streetscene. I also find that the proposal would harm the living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers at no. 52, in relation to outlook. As such the proposal would be contrary to national and local policy. For the reasons given and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

Mike Fox

INSPECTOR