

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2017

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J2373/W/17/3168122

1 St Lukes Road, Blackpool FY4 2EL

- 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 Mark Smith against the decision of Blackpool Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0474, dated 28 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of extension at second floor level on top of the roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of extension at second floor level on top of the roof at 1 St Lukes Road, Blackpool FY4 2EL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 16/0474, dated 28 July 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: B/17/34/01 and Site Location Plan.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme and a fresh planning application should normally be made. However plan Ref: B/17/34/01 which was lodged with the appeal amends the layout of the existing garage that is next to 512 Lytham Road. As it does not change the proposed development considered by the Council and residents, I have judged this appeal on the basis of plan Ref: B/17/34/01.
3. I note an alternative description of development is found on the appellant's appeal form to that on the application form. I consider this better reflects the proposed development. As such, I have used this at the top of this decision.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on: (i) the character and appearance of the area; and (ii) the living conditions of the occupants of No 512, with regards to privacy.
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Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site is on the corner of Lytham Road and St Lukes Road. Properties in Lytham Road are of various scale, massing and design. They use a mixture of brick and render with slate or tile roofs. With the exception of 510 and 512 Lytham Road, which are dormer bungalows, properties are either two or three storey high. Dwellings in St Lukes Road are generally two storey semi-detached properties and are of a consistent design and style, in that they use hipped roofs, with a central chimney, two storey bay windows to the front elevation and are constructed in red brick with a slate roof.
6. The appeal property is distinct, with its flat roof construction that is screened behind a parapet wall. The property addresses both Lytham Road and St Lukes Road and is two storey high. Although its scale is marginally greater than Nos 510 and 512, the properties scale and massing is broadly consistent with nearby properties. Two storey bay windows face Lytham Road behind a single storey conservatory.
7. Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) explains that *the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.*
8. The proposed flat roof design is not typical of the roof forms found in Lytham Road or St Lukes Road. However the existing property isn't either and the style of the appeal scheme is fitting for this unique building. While, the site is prominently located on a corner and on a busy road into the town centre, the proposal would be set in from each elevation, especially from Lytham Road. Furthermore the property is set back from St Lukes Road and Lytham Road and the extension would be partially screened by the existing parapet wall. As a result, I consider the proposal, even with its flat roof design would not appear to be unduly bulky. The proposal would also be an effective use of the existing building, by providing a private study and lounge for the occupants in a location close to public transport and the Highfield Road District Centre.
9. The Planning Practice Guidance¹ advises that *materials should be practical, durable, affordable and attractive. Choosing the right materials can greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings. They may not have to match, but colour, texture, grain and reflectivity can all support harmony.* Matching bricks and a stone capped parapet wall would be used; both would be consistent with the existing property and nearby dwellings on the northern side of St Lukes Road. They would reinforce local distinctiveness. While large grey aluminium glazed doors would be used in the Lytham Road elevation that would differ to the property's linear bay windows, I consider that they would not unduly affect the extension's harmony, given that they would be, in part, obscured from view. Accordingly, I consider the proposal would represent a high quality design as it would respond to the site's character and appearance and the street scenes of St Lukes Road and Lytham Road.

¹ Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph: 023 Reference ID: 26-023-20140306 and Paragraph: 028 Reference ID: 26-028-20140306

10. For these reasons, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would comply with Policy CS7 of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012-2027) (Core Strategy); saved Policies LQ1, LQ4 and LQ14 of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001/2016 (Local Plan) and paragraphs 17 and 56 to 65 of the Framework. These together seek, among other things, high quality design of an appropriate scale and massing that use complementary materials so that they make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment.

Living conditions

11. The adjacent dwelling, No 512 has pitched roof dormer windows in the front and rear roof planes. There are also four obscure glazed windows facing the appeal site together with a door. These openings abut a paved drive way which extends down the flank elevation of No 512 to a single storey pitched roof garage to the rear. A single storey extension adjoins the pitched roof garage and the rear elevation of No 512, thereby enclosing the rear garden.
12. I understand revisions have been made since the refusal of an earlier planning permission. Even so, access to the roof was obtainable by a ladder. Although this is not a typical staircase, it does facilitate access onto the roof which at the time of my visit did have a table and chairs on it. Still, it is unclear to what extent the roof may or may not be used as a terrace by the occupants' and guests of the bed and breakfast accommodation.
13. The proposed glazed doors would face Lytham Road. Thus, views from the proposed extension would be to properties opposite and not No 512. The former are a considerable distance away. While occupants' could use the external part of the roof, the extension would be sited roughly 0.8 metres from the parapet wall nearest No 512 that is approximately 1 metre above the roof. As a result, the parapet wall would screen part of the extension's massing. It would not therefore appear to be overbearing. Also, despite the proposal's elevated position, siting, massing and design, I do not consider that it would result in an adverse loss of privacy to the occupants' of No 512. This is due to the obscure glazed flank elevation windows and the heavy screening of No 512's rear garden afforded by their garage and rear extension.
14. Accordingly, I conclude on this issue that the proposal would comply with Core Strategy Policy CS7, saved Local Plan Policies LQ14 and BH3 together with paragraph 17 of the Framework. Collectively these seek, among other things, to ensure that the scale, design and siting of the proposed development does not adversely affect adjoining properties to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Conclusion and Conditions

15. I have had regard to the Council's suggested conditions and the appellant's comments. A condition regarding the approved plans is necessary in the interests of certainty. I have not imposed the condition about the glazing in the proposal's west elevation, as it would not be necessary, relevant to the development to be permitted or reasonable, given my findings.
16. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR