

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 March 2017

by Megan Thomas Barrister-at-Law

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

Decision date: 12 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/D/17/3168671
85 Redbreast Road, Bournemouth, BH9 3AN

- 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 Harley against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2016-26138-B, dated 19 October 2016, was refused by notice dated 14 December 2016.
 - The development described in the application is "retrospective insertion of dormer window into side elevation."
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This decision is issued in accordance with section 56(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended and supersedes that issued on the 10 April 2017.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The development consisting of a dormer structure and windows in the side elevation of the dwellinghouse has already taken place. The appellants have submitted a number of plans as part of the planning application and having undertaken a site visit both inside and outside the dwelling I am satisfied that the plans submitted accurately reflect the development that has taken place. I shall therefore treat the appeal accordingly.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in the appeal are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, and the effect on the living conditions of the occupants of 87 Redbreast Road with particular regard to outlook.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a detached house with two storeys plus accommodation in the roof. It is situated on a residential road in Bournemouth. It is close to the junction of Redbreast Road with Redbreast Road North and Priory View Road.
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No.87 Redbreast Road, the neighbouring property facing the side dormer, is a bungalow.

5. Part of the planning history of the appeal site indicates that in 2016 planning permission was granted by the Council for an increase in the roof ridge height and for an alteration from a hip to a gable roof at the rear of the dwelling. However, as part of that planning permission, permitted development rights to construct dormers were removed by an attached planning condition. Nevertheless, the appellants apparently built the dormer relying on inaccurate advice from a planning consultant, and therefore, I do not consider it is appropriate to treat the appellants as if they have undertaken unauthorised development intentionally. The Council does not express a view on that matter.
6. The Council's guidance *Residential Extensions A Design Guide for Householders* (2008) advises that dormers should generally have pitched roofs and be positioned in line with existing windows on the property. It also indicates that large flat roof dormers will not be considered acceptable.
7. The structure that has been erected measures about 3.2m wide (in comparison with a roof ridge width of about 3.7m). It is positioned lower than the roof ridge and set up from the eaves but it has a flat roof. It contains two windows. Whilst the cladding used on the structure blends reasonably well with the roof tiles, the size of the dormer is out of proportion to the roof slope in which it sits and as a result it dominates it. The flat roof emphasises the width. The large size of the dormer is also noticeably out of proportion because the width of the front elevation of the dwelling, as it presents to Redbreast Road, is not particularly wide. I consider that the dwelling looks unbalanced and top heavy and this is not as a result of the increased roof ridge height but as a result of the dormer structure as built.
8. Whilst on my site visit, I noted that there were clear views of the dormer from parts of Priory View Road, Redbreast Road and Redbreast Road North. The topography in the area often allows those views. As a result, the dormer is a negative addition to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, appearing overly large with a horizontal emphasis. Whilst some dwellings in nearby streets have dormers, most appeared to be reasonably sympathetic to the host dwelling and streetscene, but those that are not sympathetic do not provide a cogent reason for allowing the one before me.
9. I conclude that the development unacceptably harms the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area, and conflicts with policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (adopted 2012) and the Council's guidance *Residential Extensions A Design Guide for Householders* (2008).

Living conditions of neighbours at no.87

10. No.87 Redbreast Road is a bungalow. It has a flank wall which forms the boundary with the appeal site and this includes a window which faces directly into the appeal site. However, this window is fitted with obscured glass and is on the ground floor where views of the dormer structure from inside the bungalow would not, in any event, be possible.

- 11.No.87 has a rear garden. However, given the orientation of the dormer and its position on the roof of no.85, I do not consider that it creates a sense of enclosure or oppressiveness to the occupants of no.87 when using their rear garden or when entering their property from Redbreast Road. Given separation distances between the dormer windows and the rear garden there is no materially increased overlooking of the rear garden by reason of the insertion of the dormer structure into the roof of no.85.
- 12.I do not therefore consider that the development harms the living conditions of the occupants of no.87 Redbreast Road whether through loss of outlook or otherwise.

Conclusion

- 13.Whilst I do not consider that the development harms neighbours' living conditions, I have found that it harms the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. I have borne in mind the benefits flowing from the development in adding to the family living accommodation within the dwelling and I have had regard to the appeal decision highlighted by the appellants, nevertheless, I have concluded that in this case the harm is of a degree which is not acceptable.
- 14.Having considered all representations made, for the reasons given above, I dismiss the appeal.

Megan Thomas

INSPECTOR