
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 June 2018

by Benjamin Webb BA(Hons) MA MA MSc PGDip(UD) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 July 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/W/18/3194114

69 Glenferness Avenue, Bournemouth BH3 7ER

- 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 Collins against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2017-6241-B, dated 7 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 6 November 2017.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing building and erection of a replacement dwellinghouse.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area (the conservation area).

Reasons

3. The Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area Appraisal (the Appraisal), provides an analysis of the conservation area. This document was produced in 2009 but published in 2011. I consider that it provides a reasonably up-to-date source of evidence.
4. The conservation area appears to mainly consist of substantial detached dwellings of a relatively uniform size set within spacious well-planted mature gardens. These dwellings largely date between the late nineteenth century and inter-war period. Principal roads such as Glenferness Avenue are broad, contain verges and are lined by trees, which alongside generous front gardens provide the street scene with a spacious character and verdant appearance. As such I consider that the significance of the conservation area principally resides in the character and appearance of the layout, and architectural style of development dating between the late nineteenth century and inter-war period.
5. The Appraisal places the property within the 'North West' character area, whose period of development, and quality of component buildings are described in Figures 16 and 21. Whilst the road network is shown to date between the 1920s-1930s, and a high proportion of development also dates to these periods, the west side of Glenferness Avenue is mostly populated by post-war buildings, including 69 Glenferness Avenue. Whilst some of these

buildings are viewed to make a 'positive' contribution to the conservation area, No 69 is viewed to make a 'negative' contribution. Both parties agree therefore that there is scope for improvement through redevelopment and I agree.

6. Many front gardens along Glenferness Road are partly hard surfaced in order to enable parking. In most cases this is only appreciable close up given the retention of boundary enclosure and/or planting along the boundary. This has helped to sustain significant attributes of the street layout and the verdant appearance of the street scene in spite of change. Though the proposed driveway and parking area would result in loss of the existing lawn, the visual effect of the hard surfacing could be made acceptable and consistent with the established pattern by planting along the boundary. The scheme would otherwise retain existing trees. As such I consider that the verdant character of the street scene could be preserved.
7. The existing building has a relatively compact form and shallow depth compared to more substantial inter-war buildings of positive character located within the north-west character area. In support of the more substantial replacement building proposed, the appellant has provided a number of charts which seek to summarise variation within existing development and which I have taken into account. Whilst I agree that the existing building does appear to be of lesser scale than some inter-war developments, the effect of design judged in 3 dimensions, architecturally, and relative to its particular site and setting cannot be justified solely in terms of statistics. In this regard I have considered the proposed design on its own merits.
8. Despite variation in size and specific design, inter-war buildings, and a reasonably large proportion of post-war buildings within the vicinity, are predominantly characterised and distinguished by designs which feature a strong horizontal emphasis. Horizontal emphasis appears to be expressed chiefly as a product of proportion, particularly the greater width versus height of key elevations, use of linear window arrangements, and hipped roofs featuring sometimes relatively low pitches. Oblique views of these roofs are generally allowed from the street given the generous spacing of properties. It is apparent in this context that hipped roof forms play both a distinctive stylistic role, and a role in visually limiting volume and apparent mass. Substantial chimney stacks are often a feature within original designs.
9. Against this architectural context the proportions of the front elevation would feature a relatively modest width versus height, with very limited horizontal emphasis otherwise provided by 3 sets of windows. The majority of the building would be accommodated beneath both a substantial and substantially flat roof dressed around the edges with tiled hips. This would extend, along with the building itself, to a considerable depth within the plot. A very small chimney stack set well below the ridgeline would also feature.
10. The combined effects would, in my opinion, produce a form whose emphasis within the front elevation erred more toward the vertical than the horizontal. This would visually accentuate the considerable bulk of the building that would otherwise result from its substantial size and the heavy rectilinear mass of its roof. The latter could be seen and identified in oblique views, views from the adjacent junction with Carrbridge Road, and views from Carrbridge Road itself. As such, and relative to other roof forms, the proposed roof would appear appreciably at odds with the character of the established roofscape. In

comparison with neighbouring buildings to either side the form proposed would appear visually dominant, giving it a prominence within the street scene that would further emphasise the discordant aspects of its design noted above, and which also include its diminutive chimney stack. As a whole this would give rise to harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area of different and more visually prominent nature to that of the existing building.

11. The appellant diagrammatically presents a fallback position that would entail an extension that would expand the footprint of the building to cover a similar area to that covered by the proposed development. The extension would however be single storey. Even in the absence of specific design details, it is clear that in terms of scale the visual impact of such an extension would be of an entirely different type and magnitude to that produced by the proposed development. As such the fact that this fallback is considered to exist does not change my assessment of the adverse impact of the development proposed.
12. The appellant references paragraph 131 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in support of the scheme. However insofar as I consider that the development would neither sustain nor enhance the significance of the conservation area, would not obviously make a contribution to the economic vitality of the area, or make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness, the development would in fact be at odds with the paragraph's objectives. The scheme's failure to protect or enhance the built and historic environment would therefore also fail in terms of this key aspect of the environmental dimension of sustainable development outlined in paragraph 7 of the Framework.
13. Considered as a whole the development would achieve neither the preservation nor the enhancement of the character or appearance of the conservation area. With reference to paragraph 134 of the Framework, I consider that the development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. Whilst the appellant has claimed that the new dwelling would, as a matter of course, be more energy efficient than the existing, make more efficient use of the land, and would meet a desire for additional and higher quality family living space, I find that these features offer very limited benefit to the public at large, and have been given no reason to consider that they could not also be achieved by an alternative and more appropriate design. Therefore giving great weight to the conservation of this heritage asset, and in view of the considerable importance and weight to be afforded to the statutory objective of preservation of the conservation area, I find that the development would provide no public benefits of nature or scale sufficient to outweigh the harm caused.
14. Whilst being contrary to guidance within the Framework, the development would also be contrary to Policy CS 39 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy, which seeks amongst other things, to protect designated heritage assets from proposals that would adversely affect their significance; Policy CS 41, which seeks amongst other things, to secure development whose character and appearance respects its surroundings; and saved Policy 4.4 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan, whose objectives are broadly aligned with Policies CS 39 and CS 41.

Other Matter

15. The appellant has provided copies of notes offering personal support for the development. However though I acknowledge that such support exists it does not erase or outweigh the harm that I have found that the development would cause to the conservation area.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above the appeal is dismissed.

Benjamin Webb

INSPECTOR