
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2019

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 February 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/D/18/3216948

12 St Albans Avenue, Bournemouth, Dorset BH8 9EE

- 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 Glen Bell against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2018-26947-A, dated 13 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2018.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a garage and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a garage and associated works at 12 St Albans Avenue, Bournemouth, Dorset BH8 9EE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 7-2018-26947-A, dated 13 August 2018, and the plans numbered 2016.689.03 and 2016.689.04.

Procedural Matters

2. I have used the description that was given on the decision notice and which was repeated on the appeal form. This gives an accurate but more concise description of the works compared with that which was given on the original application form.
3. The application was retrospective and at the time of my visit I saw that the development was complete.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. St Albans Avenue is a residential street with a straight alignment that runs east to west for some considerable length. It is characterised by mostly two-storey detached dwelling houses of mixed appearance and sizes. The Council has described the pattern of development along St Albans Avenue as having a strong defining character and regular rhythm to the street scene. I recognised this along the eastern half of the road, where the topography of the land is

reasonably flat and the properties are set back from the road along regular building lines and behind landscaped front gardens, with typically low boundary enclosures to the back edges of the pavements. However, I observed a noticeable shift in character towards its western end where the gradient of the road drops suddenly and fairly steeply down towards its intersection with Charminster Road. The houses to the south side along this stretch, including the appeal property, sit high up above the road with a mix of methods used to retain the significant change in land levels to these properties' frontages. The houses are built on a reasonably uniform building line, but I was unable to detect any regular rhythm or consistency to the plots' frontages or the means of enclosures at the back edge of the pavement along this stretch.

6. The frontage to No 12 has been significantly altered through the construction of a double-width garage set slightly back from the front boundary and level with the road and pavement. This has cut deeply into the front garden, with its flat roof providing a terrace above, with a further terraced level above leading up to the finished floor level of the dwelling. A flight of steps to the side of the garage provides pedestrian access from St Albans Avenue to the front door of the house.
7. Garages to the front are not alien to this part of St Albans Avenue with two such examples at Nos 14 and 18 immediately nearby. In another case the frontage to No 16 has been deeply cut away to provide off-street parking for two cars with a high retaining wall to the back and sides, and the enclosure to No 20 comprises a tall but shallow, hard-built terraced retaining structure immediately at the back edge of the pavement. There are no two frontages the same at this point.
8. The garage to the front of No 12 is wider than the other two examples, but ample space to the side is retained to ensure that it does not dominate the width of the plot. Neither does it stand proud in the street scene due to its recessed position. Its presence is further muted by the backdrop of the higher land levels and imposing visual presence of the dwelling above. In my opinion, although a fairly substantial structure, the specific circumstances of the site and surrounding context ensures that it appears well assimilated into the mixed character of the street scene. I am therefore unable to find any conflict with the guidelines for garages within part 3.5 of the Council's *Residential Extensions - A Design Guide for Householders September 2008* or with Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012) insofar as it seeks to ensure that development is designed to respect the site and its surroundings. For these same reasons I find no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it deals with the quality of design.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given, I conclude that the development does not harm the character or appearance of the area. Accordingly, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, the appeal is allowed. As the development has taken place, there is no need for me to impose any conditions.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR