The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 May 2019

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 May 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/D/19/3220283
48 Harbour Road, Bournemouth BH6 4DE

- 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 S Greenfield against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
- The application Ref 7-2018-19859-B, dated 13 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 9 November 2018.
- The development proposed is a two storey front extension and garage conversion for additional habitable space.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey front extension and garage conversion for additional habitable space at 48 Harbour Road, Bournemouth BH6 4DE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 7-2018-19859-B, dated 13 September 2018, and the plans submitted with it, 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: 001 Rev A and 005 Rev D (excluding the 1:500 scale Site Plan).

    3) Prior to the installation of the external cladding on the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted, details of the colour to be used shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr S Greenfield against Bournemouth Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Procedural Matter

3. The decision to refuse planning permission was made by Bournemouth Borough Council, which ceased to exist on 1 April 2019, following a merger with Christchurch Borough Council and Borough of Poole Council to form the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Unitary Authority. Provisions within the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008 allow for any "plan, scheme, statement, or strategy"

prepared by one of the merging authorities to be treated as if "it had been prepared and, if so required, published by the single tier council for the whole or such part of its area as corresponds to the area to which the particular plan, scheme, statement or strategy relates". The status of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012) (the LPCS) has not therefore changed as a result of the merger.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. Harbour Road lies in a residential area composed of a wide range of building styles and materials. Although it is a long straight road, and most of the dwellings are set back, the character of the area is not defined by a rigid building line. The dwellings to the southwest of the appeal site front Solent Road, and therefore back onto Harbour Road. Consequently, this stretch of the road is characterised by high boundary walls adjacent to the back edge of the pavement. The corner property to the northeast of the appeal site fronts Broadway and has a high side boundary wall to Harbour Road. The appeal dwelling, and the 2 adjacent dwellings immediately to the northeast, front the road and have low boundary walls. They therefore form a small group that is visually distinct from the rest of the development on this side of the road.

6. The houses opposite the appeal site face Harbour Road and their front elevations are prominent in the streetscene due to the generally low boundary treatments. They are a mixture of 2-storey properties with a range of gables and dormers on their front roofslopes. The appeal property is therefore seen within a diverse group of buildings with no unifying design approach. The wider setting comprises an area of detached dwellings with spacious curtilages arranged within a formal grid of roads. The character and appearance of the area is defined more by this pattern of development than by the design of the individual buildings within it.

7. The appeal property has a garage and porch projecting from its front elevation and a dormer in its front roofslope. The proposal is to incorporate these elements into extended living accommodation that would result in a pair of 2-storey gables facing the road. The Council's adopted Residential Extensions - A Design Guide for Householders (2008) (the Design Guide), provides guidance on front extensions. It advises that in areas where there is an irregular building line and properties are unique in their architectural style, there may be more flexibility to provide a front extension. The Design Guide also advises that front extensions should be in scale with the original building and the roof pitch should relate to the existing house.

8. I saw that the appeal site lies in an area where there is no rigidity in the building line and where there is a wide variety of architectural styles. The extensions would only add about 6 square metres to the footprint of the building and the height of the gables would not exceed the ridge height of the existing dwelling. Consequently, the proposals would be in scale with the building. The pitch of the gables would relate well to the roofslopes of the host dwelling. Therefore, with regards to the main issue, I find no conflict with the advice in the Design Guide.

9. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and the Council's Core Strategy seeks to achieve quality design in all development proposals. Being on the front elevation, the extension will be prominent, and these aims are therefore particularly relevant. The current roofing arrangement of the garage, porch and dormer is quite complicated, involving differing eaves heights, roofslopes cutting into one another and an area of flat roof. Although the eaves height of the extension would be higher than that of the main roof of the host dwelling, the proposals would provide a simpler, more cohesive arrangement.

10. The gables are of different widths, so the adoption of a common roof pitch results in differing ridge heights. The gables also project to different extents and, as a result, would be viewed on different planes, meaning that the difference in their height would not be particularly evident. The dominance of the extension would also be reduced by the offset in the projection of the gables, as it would result in them being read as 2 separate elements rather than as a single entity. The smaller gable would be completely hidden by the larger one in approaching views from the northeast. In view of these considerations I find that the extension would not be overly dominant in the streetscene.

11. Overall, I conclude that the development would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the property or the wider area. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy CS41 of the LPCS, which seeks to ensure that development should, through its scale, density, layout, siting, character and appearance, be designed to respect the site and its surroundings.

Other Matters

12. The impact of the extension on the living conditions of the occupants of adjoining properties was also raised in representations. There is a window in the side elevation of 50 Harbour Road that would lose some light and outlook. I saw, however, that a larger window in the front elevation serves the same room, so the occupants would retain acceptable levels of light and outlook. The extension would not affect the living conditions of the occupants of any other dwellings.

Conditions

13. In accordance with the legislation I have imposed a condition limiting the period within which the development must commence. I have also included a condition specifying the relevant plans as this provides certainty, however I have excluded the 1:500 scale Site Plan from the list of approved plans as it shows a dormer window which did not form part of the scheme considered by the local planning authority.

14. The local planning authority has requested a condition requiring that, notwithstanding the details included on the application form, the materials to be used for the extension must match the existing building. The existing dwelling has painted render walls and a concrete tiled roof. The proposed materials on the application form are rendered walls with cedral cladding at upper floor levels and roof tiles to match the existing house.

15. I saw that there was a very wide range of materials in the area, including horizontal cladding at No 50 and tile-hanging at first floor level immediately

opposite the appeal site. I find that the proposed cladding at first floor level would help reduce the apparent bulk of the extension and maintain the horizontal emphasis of the elevation. I am therefore not persuaded that a condition requiring the gables to be rendered is necessary to maintain the character and appearance of the area. However, as cedral cladding comes in a wide range of colours I have imposed a condition requiring the local planning authority's approval of the colour of the cladding.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR