



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020

by Tobias Gethin BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/19/3235721

5 Southbourne Coast Road, Bournemouth BH6 4BE

- 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 Edwards against the decision of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2019-19652-F, dated 24 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is for extensions to raise roof height and create first and second floor accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for extensions to raise roof height and create first and second floor accommodation at 5 Southbourne Coast Road, Bournemouth BH6 4BE in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 7-2019-19652-F, dated 24 April 2019 and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No. A Revision 1 (Existing Floor Plans & Elevations); and Drawing No. A Revision 4 (Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations).

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Edwards against BCP Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Procedural Matters

3. On 1 April 2019, Bournemouth Borough Council merged with Borough of Poole Council and Christchurch Borough Council to become a Unitary Authority, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council. Until such time as they are revoked or replaced, the development plans for the merged local planning authorities remain in place for the area within the BCP authority which they relate to. It is therefore necessary to determine this appeal with reference to policies set out in the plans produced by the now dissolved borough council.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:

- the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
- the living conditions of adjoining occupiers, with particular regard to 7 Southbourne Coast Road, 4 Warren Edge Close and 19 Warren End Road.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site sits in a row of four plots facing Southbourne Coast Road, three of which currently contain bungalows. With a residential character, the surrounding area contains a variety of buildings with a mixture of sizes, designs and styles, and some properties have relatively significant areas of glazing. Built form in the locality includes bungalows – many with accommodation in the roof – and larger buildings, several of which have three or more floors. The height of the existing property on the site is less than that of surrounding bungalows and at the front it sits on lower ground than No 7. Accordingly, built form in the locality has a varied form, scale and appearance.
6. The appeal proposal would increase the height, bulk and mass of the existing property. However, with the third floor situated within the roof, the proposed development would not be significantly higher than the existing chalet style bungalows on either side, particularly with No 7 situated on higher ground than the site. Furthermore, planning permission has recently been granted for a three storey building at No 3, and No 1 is already three storeys. The increased footprint would also not be significant, with the generous set-back to the highway maintaining the sense of spaciousness of the site and locality. Accordingly, the appeal proposal would not be experienced as a bulky, incongruous or dominating feature and its relationship with surrounding built form would be acceptable.
7. The Council's guidance document, Residential Extensions – A Design Guide for Householders (September 2008), sets out that extensions should, amongst other aspects, be subservient and that their bulk and mass should be smaller than the existing building. The proposed development would not achieve this. However, it would not appear unbalanced and the proposed elevations show no difference between external materials, which the guidance document highlights as potential issues with extensions. It seems to me that the resulting building would also essentially read as a new building rather than as an extended bungalow. I therefore place limited weight in this case on the fact that the appeal proposal would not be subservient to the original property.
8. The proposed development would include relatively extensive areas of glazing, particularly on the front elevation. However, the glazing would not be significantly greater than that of several nearby properties. Its relatively simple design, detailing and overall appearance – including the eaves above the central window, the side rather than front entrance and the section of flat roof – would also sufficiently respect surrounding built form. Although the front and rear elevations would be different, they would not be seen together. The development would therefore not appear out of character.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area. I therefore find that it accords with Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy

(2012) (BLP). Amongst other aspects, this requires well-designed development which respect the site and its surroundings. The proposal would also be consistent with the provisions in the Framework in relation to achieving well-designed places.

Living conditions

10. The increased height and the additional projections at the front – including the projecting balcony – and rear would reduce the amount of light and sunlight reaching No 7, including its front kitchen window and balcony, side rooflight serving a bathroom, and rear patio. However, the front extension would not be significant while the rear extension would not project beyond the closest rear wall of No 7. The shared boundary wall and the spacing between the two properties would remain, while the additional height would be mitigated by the proposed pitched roof, No 7's slightly elevated position and that its main outlook faces south rather than towards the site. The development would therefore not unacceptably dominate No 7 nor result in a significant reduction in the levels of daylight and sunlight it receives.
11. The appeal proposal would introduce first-floor windows on the rear elevation of the property and some side facing rooflights. These windows would face the rear garden of the site, which backs on to Nos 4 and 19 to the rear, and to No 7 to the side. The development would therefore result in windows with views towards adjoining plots.
12. However, any overlooking of No 7 from the proposed rear windows would be limited to oblique views due to the existing boundary wall, the orientation of the plots – with the proposed rear windows not directly facing No 7 – and the spacing between the proposed rear windows and the shared boundary. The proposed plans show that the side rooflights would be relatively small and situated at a high level, while their position on the sloping part of the roof indicates that they would also face slightly upwards.
13. Boundary treatment, an outbuilding and a single-storey garage provide good screening between the site and No 19. These would limit views from the proposed development to No 19's garden, habitable rooms and summerhouse. The boundary wall also provides some screening between the site and No 4, and that property is set back a little from the boundary. Although the degree of separation between the rear of the proposed development and Nos 4 and 19 would not be particularly large, the above matters indicate that the appeal proposal would not result in unacceptable overlooking to the rear of Nos 4 and 19 and that sufficient privacy would be maintained.
14. The proposed first-floor rear windows would not be directly opposite the first-floor side windows in Nos 4 and 19. Despite the separation distance involved, any overlooking between first-floor windows on the site and those properties would therefore be limited and involve only indirect, oblique views. The available evidence indicates that No 19's first-floor side window is also meant to be obscure glazed and that action in relation to this has occurred since the Council issued its Decision Notice for the appeal proposal.
15. Actual levels of overlooking from the proposed development to adjoining plots, including private gardens and habitable rooms, would therefore be relatively limited. Accordingly, it is not necessary to obscure glaze the proposed rear or side windows. This is also a residential area with several properties located in

relatively close proximity. As such, a certain degree of mutual overlooking would not be unusual.

16. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would not harm the living conditions of adjoining occupiers, with particular regard to Nos 7, 4 and 19. I therefore find that it accords with BLP Policy CS41. Amongst other aspects, this requires well-designed development which does not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. The proposal would also be consistent with the provisions in the Framework in relation to providing a high standard of amenity for existing users and the guidance in the Council's Residential Extensions guide in relation to development proposals respecting neighbours.

Other matters

17. The proposed floor plans include two kitchens, dining rooms and lounges, and concern has been raised that the proposed building could therefore be used as flats and no longer cater for a family. However, the proposed development involves extensions to the existing property and does not propose to convert it to separate flats. The appellant has also indicated that the extended dwelling would provide sufficient space for several generations of their family. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis, and while there would be an increase in the number of habitable rooms on the site, the Council and Highway Authority have indicated that the existing parking spaces would be sufficient.

Conclusion and Conditions

18. For the above reasons, the appeal is allowed.
19. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty. I have not imposed a condition requiring a Ground Investigation because I have little substantive evidence to suggest that such a condition is necessary to make the development acceptable. The Council has not suggested any other conditions and I am satisfied that no other conditions are necessary to make the development acceptable.

Tobias Gethin

INSPECTOR