The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2020

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/19/3243362
64 Glenferness Avenue, Bournemouth BH3 7EU

- 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 P Hassell against the decision of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.
- The application Ref 7-2019-12641-K, dated 21 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 November 2019.
- The development proposed is to attach Tier Stone Wall Cladding in an `Autumn style' to the front and side elevation of the property. The Tier stone cladding will be attached to the front and side of the house up to the existing line of cement render no more than 2.5 metres high with a total coverage area of 30 square metres for all the works. To continue the line of cement render at the side of the property to join with the stone cladding with an area measuring 1.65m wide x 2.5m high. To continue with the cladding to surround the sides and above the garage to the left of the property. To use a top-quality stone from the Tier Group and fix the cladding using that particular manufacturer's own recommended cement mix.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Most of the proposed stone cladding has already been installed. I am therefore largely considering the development retrospectively.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The Meyrick Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area (the CA) comprises two main parts: a residential area to the north of the railway line; and an area to the south that is largely open space and woodland. The appeal site lies in the residential area, which is composed mainly of detached Victorian, Edwardian and inter-war houses, in spacious planted gardens, surrounded by low brick walls. Together with the mature street planting, this gives the area a cohesive and distinctive suburban character. Within this overall uniformity of scale and pattern, there are historic phases of development that can be clearly identified by the detailed design, appearance and form of the buildings. The significance of the CA lies in the pattern of development, the period architecture of the

buildings within it, and the clearly defined eras of construction which reveal its historic evolution.

5. 64 Glenferness Avenue lies towards the western edge of the CA, in an area of inter-war housing dating from the 1930s, the most recent era of development within the CA. It is a large, detached house, in a spacious garden, set back from a tree-lined street behind a low brick wall. It is therefore typical of the general character of the CA. The architecture of the house is reflective of the era within which it was built. The red-brick walls, plain clay tiled roof, prominent chimney stacks, jettied overhanging first floor, and deeply overhanging eaves are all features repeated on other houses of this period within the CA, and which contribute towards the distinctiveness of this phase of development. It follows, therefore, that the building is identified as making a positive contribution to the CA in the Meyrick Park & Talbot Woods Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) (the CA Appraisal).

6. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.

7. The proposals involve covering the red brick of the lower parts of the house and garages with a stone facing. Most of the stone has already been installed, and I saw that its mottled colour, narrow coursing and contemporary appearance was incongruous with the period characteristics of surrounding buildings. The appellant contends that the red brickwork is not, in itself, a feature that is worthy of retention. However, I saw that it is a material that is highly characteristic of the CA in general, and this distinctive era of its development in particular. Its replacement with a different, and uncharacteristic material, has resulted in a discordance with the prominent red brick chimneys of the house, and its distinctive red brick boundary wall, which is largely continuous along this side of the avenue between its junctions with Dunkeld and Alyth Roads. As a result, the contribution the house makes to the cohesive character of the CA has been diminished.

8. I am mindful that there are other buildings within the CA that have elements of external stone facing to greater or lesser degrees. However, within the vicinity of the appeal site, those that have stone cladding are largely identified in the CA Appraisal as being neutral or negative contributors. The CA Appraisal does recognise that a new development, incorporating stone, has been built within the CA without harm at 7 and 7a Glenferness Avenue. Nevertheless, it goes on to state that this development replaced buildings that added little character to the CA, and would not be appropriate in many other locations.

9. The appellant also refers to a dwelling that was approved by the Council at 82 East Avenue, incorporating stone in its external materials. I do not have full details of the planning considerations involved in that case, but I note that it replaced a building identified in the CA Appraisal as a negative contributor. I therefore find none of the examples to be directly comparable with the case before me, which should, in any event be considered on its own merits.

10. The building has been the subject of some relatively recent alterations. I saw that grey-framed windows had been installed, which lack the vertical division and ornamentation that is characteristic of the surrounding properties. Furthermore, the render at first floor level is white, unlike the cream finish of the adjacent houses. These changes have resulted in it having a somewhat

different appearance to the adjacent houses at 58 – 62 Glenferness Avenue, which are also positive contributors to the CA. Nevertheless, the overall form and architecture of the house still bear witness to its period of construction, and historical association with this part of the CA. The addition of stone cladding would be an additional alteration, which would further mask this association, so would be harmful to the significance of the CA.

11. Although there is, on close inspection, a variety of materials in the CA, the predominance of brick, render and tile is typical of this part of it. The incongruous nature of the stone is clearly visible in close views from in front of the property, over the low brick boundary wall. The uncharacteristic appearance of the material is also clearly discernible in views from the opposite side of the road between Nos 57 and 65.

12. The harm that would arise would be localised, and therefore the impact on the CA, as a whole, would be less than substantial within the meaning of Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). However, less than substantial harm does not mean less than substantial weight should be afforded to this harm. Rather, as the Framework sets out, great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The Framework advises that less than substantial harm should be considered in a balanced manner, against any public benefits associated with the development. The only public benefit arising would be through any additional employment during the installation works. However, this would be very limited, and would not therefore outweigh the harm that I have identified to the character and appearance of the CA.

13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not respect the character of the dwelling, and would be harmful to the contribution that it makes to the CA. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies CS39 and CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012), and saved Policy 4.4 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan (2002). These policies seek to protect designated heritage assets from inappropriate alterations, or other proposals that would adversely affect their significance. The proposal would also be contrary to the Framework's aim to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR