



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 September 2020

by Jonathan Manning BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 12 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/20/3252145

22 Bure Close, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 4EE

- 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 Ms M. Coleby against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref 8/19/1546/HOU, dated 9 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 26 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is for rear two storey extension with dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. I observed on my site visit that the proposed development has been constructed.
3. The appellant is of the view that she has been affected by a suggested change in the Council's interpretation of the General Permitted Development Order. However, such matters are not for me to consider as part of this appeal and I have considered the scheme on its merits.

Main Issue

4. The main issue of the appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located on Bure Close and accommodates a detached property that has been converted into a chalet style bungalow as a result of the appeal scheme. I observed that the surrounding area is residential and Bure Close is largely characterised by detached and semi-detached bungalows and chalet style bungalows. Most of these bungalows have a prominent front gable that creates an attractive sense of place within Bure Close. Despite its location at the end of the cul-de-sac, the appeal site is evident in the street scene, including views across the open green area within Bure Close.
6. The scheme that has been constructed includes: a rear two storey extension; a flat roofed dormer that almost runs along the full length of the northern side elevation, terminating in line with the end of the two storey rear extension; and two pitched roof dormers and a centrally positioned flat roof dormer on the southern side elevation.

7. The appellant has set out that a Certificate of Lawful Development (Council Ref: 8/16/1679) has been granted for a similar scheme. I accept that there is a realistic likelihood that if this appeal should fail that the development subject to the Certificate of Lawful Development could be implemented instead. Consequently, I afford the 'fall-back' position significant weight.
8. I observed that the northern side elevation of the appeal property is clearly visible within the street scene. The almost full length flat roofed dormer on this elevation is sited close to the appeal property's eaves and extends to its ridge height. This creates a very bulky and overly dominant feature both to the host dwelling and to the street scene. When this is combined with the less bulky but nonetheless substantial three dormers on the southern elevation, the dwelling has a 'top-heavy' appearance that is out of scale with the more modest bungalows that surround the appeal site. I consider that the fenestration does little to break up the bulky appearance. Consequently, the scheme causes demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area.
9. Whilst there are other chalet style bungalows within the street scene, these generally all have much smaller dormers that do not dominate the host dwelling or the street scene. There are some other larger structures within Bure Close, but these are semi-detached properties that clearly read in the street scene as such. Further, I acknowledge that an arguably similar scheme at No 6 Bure Close has been granted permission (Council Ref: 8/10/0407). However, it is clear from the drawing of that scheme shown in the appellant's statement that the proposed flat roofed dormers are much lower on the roof slope and are therefore, in my view, proportionate to the host dwelling.
10. The combination of the two pitched roof dormers and flat roof dormer in between on the southern elevation also creates an awkward and overly complicated design that jars with the relatively simple design of the other properties in the area.
11. Turning to the fall-back position, if implemented this would result in a large flat roofed dormer on the southern side elevation. However, it would be set further back from the front elevation than the appeal scheme and would be on the less prominent elevation that has a much lesser visual impact on the street scene. Further, the flat roofed dormer on the northern side elevation would be much smaller and set significantly further back along the roof slope from the front elevation. Consequently, I am of the view that the fall-back position would have a much lesser impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. I do not agree with the appellant that the differences are minor.
12. The appellant is also of the view that other very similar schemes that would reduce the roof volume to comply with permitted development rights could also be implemented. This includes removing some of the roof space of the rear two storey extension of the property, resulting in there being no material difference to the appearance of the front of the property and its impact on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene. However, I have no detailed and scaled drawings before me of such a scheme and therefore I can not be sure that this would be feasible under permitted development rights. In addition, it is not for me to guess what the appellant

might or might not be able to do under permitted development rights. Consequently, I give very little weight to this suggestion.

13. The Council has also raised concerns with regard to the glazed and cladded gable feature to the front elevation. However, many of the existing chalet style bungalows have prominent front windows. In addition, whilst most of the front elevations of properties in the road are finished with hanging tiles, there is some variation in the area, with a property in Bure Close utilising render. As a result, I do not share these concerns. But this does not, nonetheless, overcome my other concerns.
14. Given all of the above, the scheme by virtue of its scale, bulk and design causes demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. The scheme therefore conflicts with Policy HE2 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy (2014), saved Policy H12 of the Borough of Christchurch Local Plan (2001) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
15. I have also found that the fall-back scheme would be less harmful to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area. Therefore, there are no material considerations that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict.

Other matters

16. I consider that the relationship between the scheme, including its Juliet balcony and the residential properties to the east in Southcliffe Road are not uncommon for residential areas and given the separation distances involved, there would not be any unacceptable overlooking. Further, I consider that the level of overlooking at the rear of the appeal property would be very similar to that which could be implemented by the accepted fall-back position.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, the proposal conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole. There are no material considerations that individually or in combination outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Jonathan Manning

INSPECTOR