
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2021

by **L McKay MA MRTPI**

Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/W/20/3257128
22A Exton Road, Bournemouth BH6 5QF

- 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 Jake Hayward against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2020-22932-A, dated 16 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Roof extension and conversion including raising the ridge 650mm and rear dormers'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for roof extension and conversion including raising the ridge 650mm and rear dormers at 22A Exton Road, Bournemouth BH6 5QF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 7-2020-22932-A, dated 16 February 2020 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: 20-RG/394/003, 20-RG/394/004, 20-RG/394/005 A.
 - 3) The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the proposed development shall be as specified on the application form unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Application for Costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr Jake Hayward against Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area; and the living conditions of the occupiers of 3 Ashford Road in respect of their enjoyment of their outside space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. Exton Road and surrounding streets predominantly comprise detached, two storey dwellings of very similar design, with bay windows and hipped roofs creating a

rhythm in the street scene. As such, the dwellings around the site have a generally consistent appearance despite various alterations having occurred over time. While the appeal site shares some features with neighbouring dwellings, its substantial two storey, partly flat roofed extension means it looks distinctly different to other dwellings in the area. Consequently, and given its corner location, the existing building is a prominent and incongruous feature in the street scene, and detracts from the character and appearance of the area.

5. The proposal to extend the main roof over the existing flat and dummy pitched roofs would remove the existing incongruous roof form. Although the resulting building would be somewhat wider and slightly taller than its neighbours, it would nevertheless be more consistent in appearance with its surroundings than at present. This element of the appeal proposal would therefore significantly improve the character and appearance of the existing building and surrounding area.
6. Although balconies are common elsewhere in the town, I have not been made aware of any in this area. The proposed balcony would therefore be a new and unusual addition to this otherwise consistent street scene. The Council's adopted Residential Extensions Design Guide suggests that if a balcony is out of character it is unlikely to be acceptable. In this case however, from the public realm the proposed balcony would be seen in the context of the much larger host property, which is already out of character with the area.
7. The proposed balcony would use an existing flat roof and as such would not be a particularly contrived or incongruous design. Given its limited size and use of glazed balustrades it would not be unduly prominent in the street scene, even if used for sitting out or for domestic paraphernalia. Accordingly, while in the absence of any other similar features it would be somewhat out of character, the proposed balcony would result in only limited harm to the character and appearance of the area.
8. The proposed dormers would be relatively small and well placed within the rear roof slope. Therefore, although they would be visible from Ashford Road they would not harm the character and appearance of the area.
9. Consequently, although the proposed balcony would have a limited detrimental impact, taking into account the improvements to the appearance of the building as a whole, I find that overall, the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the area. I therefore find no conflict with Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (CS), which requires all development to be well designed, of a high quality, and to contribute positively to the appearance of the public realm. Nor would it conflict with the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) to add to the overall quality of the area.

Living conditions

10. The proposed dormers would face towards the side elevation, conservatory and rear garden of 3 Ashford Road in close proximity to the boundary. They would however be relatively small features within the proposed enlarged roof, set close to the ridge. As such, when seen in the context of the whole building, they would not appear overbearing from the neighbouring property.
11. The proposed dormer to bedroom 5 would be the only window to that room, and would provide views of the garden of No 3 from an elevated position. However, both the host property and its neighbour No 24 already have large two-storey bay windows facing this garden. The proposed dormer would be further from the garden than these windows and considerably smaller. Consequently, in this context

the proposed dormer would not appear oppressive when seen from the garden of No 3.

12. Accordingly, the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupiers of No 3 in respect of their enjoyment of their outside space. The Council suggests that the failure to enhance the amenity of neighbours would result in conflict with CS Policy CS41, however the wording of the Policy is that it will 'seek to ensure' such enhancement, and it is not expressed as a mandatory requirement in order for permission to be granted. The Policy is however specific that development which would be detrimental to amenity will not be permitted. Given my finding above, the proposal would not conflict with the requirements of that Policy. Nor would it conflict with the Framework requirement to provide a high standard of amenity for existing users, or with the Council's Design Guide which seeks to resist overbearing or oppressive development.

Other Matters

13. The proposed balcony would offer views towards the front or side of several neighbouring properties and into their front gardens. It would however be some distance from these properties, and similar views are already achievable from the existing bedroom windows and from the public realm. The position of the proposed balcony would not allow any overlooking of private garden areas. As such, it would not significantly adversely affect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers in respect of privacy.
14. The appeal site is significantly different to most other properties in the area in terms of its appearance, size, shape and relationship to its neighbours. These circumstances are unlikely to be replicated elsewhere, therefore allowing this appeal would not form a precedent for other balconies in the area, as each proposal would be considered on its own merits.

Conditions

15. Conditions are necessary to require compliance with the approved plans in the interests of certainty, and to secure appropriate materials to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions set out above.

L McKay

INSPECTOR