



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 June 2021

by J J Evans BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/21/3274734

33 Montague Road, Bournemouth BH5 2EW

- 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 & Mrs Brookes against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2021-27898-A, dated 25 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is alteration and extensions to dwellinghouse to include formation of second floor level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and upon the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. 33 Montague Road (No 33) is a detached house positioned within a residential area that mostly comprises houses set within similar sized plots. Montague Road is one of several long residential streets that extend inland perpendicular to the coast road. To either side of Montague Road and many of the other streets there are numerous detached houses set within generous plots. The houses form long rows to either side of Montague Road, creating extensive and sweeping building lines.
4. In most cases along Montague Road the houses are positioned to one side of their plots, with driveways and / or garages to the other side. The repeated positioning and distinct separation between each dwelling creates a spacious appearance to the area. The generous plot sizes and the separation between the houses, along with their set back from the public highway behind similar sized front gardens, is part of the distinct local identity. Even though the houses are of a variety of styles, there is a planned homogeneity to the area due to the positioning of the dwellings within their plots. In addition, the similarity of the heights of the houses, along with their mostly traditional forms means that no one house is visually prominent, thereby giving the area a harmonious appearance.

5. No 33 makes a positive contribution to this distinct character and appearance. Constructed of render under a tiled roof, the house has a steeply hipped roof with deep eaves. The size and simplicity of the form of the roof is a distinct feature of this dwelling. Although there is a flat roofed side extension to the southern side of the house, its single storey nature retains the separation between No 33 and the neighbouring property, 35 Montague Road (No 35) at first floor level and above.
6. The host building's hipped roof would be retained, albeit there would be two storey front and side extensions. The side extension would replicate the existing building's ridge height and would be set away from the shared boundary. Notwithstanding this, given the height and size of this extension, it would erode much of the separation that currently exists between No 33 and No 35. Although the size of gaps between the properties in Montague Road varies, in this instance the proximity of the side extension to the neighbouring house would leave a narrower separation than occurs between many of the other nearby houses. This would not only erode the rhythmical spacing of the buildings in the street scene, but would create a cramped appearance that would harmfully draw the eye.
7. The cropped hip would slope away from No 35 giving some separation between the buildings and the extension would be set back from the property boundary. Despite this, the size of the extension would result in a loss of much of the spacing between the houses, creating a pinched relationship with the neighbouring house, the impact of which would be exaggerated by the presence of a cropped hip. The abrupt and truncated appearance of this hip would be at odds with the defined and lengthy generosity of the slopes present elsewhere on the house.
8. Moreover, the cropped hip would harmfully exaggerate the complexity of the roof form of the extended dwelling. In addition to the front and side extensions, there would be both front and back dormers. Within this context, the cropped hip would be a further additional design feature that would have little harmony with either the form of the host building or that of the houses nearby. Furthermore, the close proximity of the cropped hip to the dormers would create a cluttered and piecemeal roofscape that would appear overly contrived. Whilst there are a variety of forms of roofs present in neighbouring houses, most of the properties have much simpler roofs than that proposed. Given this, the form of the side extension would be an anomalous addition within the area, the harm of which would be accentuated by the erosion of the gap between No 33 and its neighbour.
9. The appellants have drawn my attention to the recently approved scheme permitting extensions to the property, and at my site visit I saw that building work was underway. From the evidence before me there are similarities between the proposed and permitted schemes. However, there are also significant differences. The permitted two storey side extension has a full hipped roof that replicates the slope of that on the host building, and there would not be a front dormer. Having regard to these differences, it does not follow that the permitted scheme sets a binding precedent for the appeal proposal.
10. For the reasons given above, the scheme would neither respect the character and appearance of the host building nor that of the area. This would be

contrary to Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012), and guidance within the Residential Extensions: A Design Guide for Householders (2008). These seek amongst other things, well designed and high quality development that respects the site and its surroundings, reflecting objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Other Matters

11. Local residents have raised a number of matters, including concerns with regard to overlooking, that the scheme would be overbearing, and that allowing the appeal would create a precedent for similar developments. However, following my findings on the main issues and in light of the appeal being dismissed, I have not considered these matters further.
12. Representations have also been made to the effect that the rights of the occupiers of 14 Portman Crescent under the Human Rights Act (1998) would be violated by the scheme. As I have decided to dismiss the appeal, my decision would not lead to any violation.
13. Finally, concerns regarding the Council's handling of the application relate to procedural matters and have no bearing on my consideration of the planning merits of the case.

Conclusion

14. Thus, for the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

J J Evans

INSPECTOR