The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2022

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/22/3303383
24 Nansen Avenue, Poole, BH15 3DA

- 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 T Doyle against the decision of BCP Council.
- The application Ref. APP/22/00575/F, dated 28 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2022.
- The development proposed is alterations and extensions to dwelling.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on the southern side of Nansen Avenue and comprises a detached two storey property with parking to the front and garden at the rear. Similar two storey detached properties are to be found to the west and east of the appeal site and further east on the southern side of the avenue. The avenue is also characterised by rows of single storey detached bungalows such as those opposite the appeal site.

4. Whilst some of the properties in Nansen Avenue have been altered and there are examples of dormer extensions, the scale of change that has occurred is modest and most of the frontages to the properties within the immediate vicinity of the appeal site appear relatively intact in that they have not been subject to extensive alterations or remodelling. Most frontages to the two storey properties are characterised by hipped roofs or narrow gables above bay projections, reflecting their original estate design, which is a positive feature of the character of the area.

5. The appeal proposal involves a number of alterations and extensions to the host property. The Council have not raised any objection to the proposed extensions to the rear and side, and the porch alterations at the front given their siting, scale, height and mass. I concur with the Council's findings in this respect. The Council do object to the proposed raising of the ridge height, the gabling of the roof and new side dormer windows, which they contend would result in an unduly intrusive and dominant feature. As I confirmed earlier, the appeal site forms part of a streetscene that largely retains its original form,

providing an element of consistency that is an attractive feature of the area. The appeal site also occupies a prominent and highly visible location, with long range views of the property possible from Wingfield Avenue to the north.

6. Within that context, the size, scale, height and mass of the proposed front gable extension and two dormers would, in my view, be excessive. They would not be sympathetic to or in proportion to the host property or adjacent properties. There are no examples of properties that are fully gabled on the front elevation within this part of the streetscene and the proposal would introduce, therefore, an intrusive and prominent feature that would be out of keeping with the surrounding area. This impact would be compounded by the proposed dormers which are large and bulky, and would occupy most of the side slopes to the main roof (as extended).

7. Combined, the proposed roof alterations would represent an incongruous addition that would disrupt the rhythm of the existing roofscape to the host property as well as that of the surrounding properties. This aspect of the appeal proposal would not be subservient to the host, would visually dominate the streetscene and result in a development that fails to integrate with the existing pattern of built development. Overall, the proposed gable extension, increase in ridge height and dormer additions would not sit comfortably on the appeal site, leading to significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.

8. The Appellant contends that the Council's refusal of planning permission is inconsistent with the approach taken elsewhere and refer to a number of examples where properties have been extended at roof level, ridge heights increased to create gable ends and dormer extensions introduced. However, none of these examples are within Nansen Avenue and they do not, therefore, form part of the immediate local context to the appeal site.

9. Any allegation of inconsistency in decision making is largely a matter to be taken up with the Council, but, even so, I have not been provided with the full planning circumstances to any of these cases or the individual considerations that led to their approval. It is not possible for me, therefore, to determine whether any of these cases are in any way directly relevant or comparable to the appeal proposal and as I noted earlier they all relate to sites that are not close to the appeal site. Furthermore, I can, of course, only consider the proposal that is before me and determine it on its individual merits having regard to the particular circumstances of the case. Consequently, none of these examples affect the findings I have reached on this issue.

10. The Appellant also states that whilst they understand the desire to protect the character of the area, this has not been deemed a specific enough asset to warrant it being included within a conservation area. The fact that a site is not included within a conservation area does not negate the requirement to assess the impact of development on its character and/or appearance. Whilst, within conservation areas, there is a specific duty to preserve or enhance the special historic interests of those designated heritage assets, part (1) (a) of policy PP27 to the Poole Local Plan (November 2018) (PLP), referred to in the Council's reason for refusal, seeks to ensure that all new development reflects or enhances the local pattern of development in terms of bulk, height, scale and visual impact, with part (2) also stating that extensions should respond to

and relate to existing buildings and maintain or enhance details that contribute positively to local character.

11. A similar approach to policy PP27 is set out in paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework) including the requirement, amongst others, for new development to add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character. I accept that this paragraph also states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change and that paragraph 44 of the National Design Guide (NDG) (January 2021) also emphasises that well designed places do not need to copy their surroundings and that it is appropriate for new development to include innovation and change to reflect how we live today. Even so, the proposed changes to the front elevation of the host property would, in my view, be excessive and result in a development that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. There is nothing innovative in the design of the proposal that would lead me to reach a different finding.

12. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would fail to comply with part (1) (a) and part (2) of policy PP27 of the PLP and the corresponding policies of the Framework.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above and having taken all the matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Roberts

INSPECTOR