



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: 12 October 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/22/3303393

32 Southwood Avenue, Bournemouth, BH6 3QB

- 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 Phil Wall against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref. 7-2022-17864-A, dated 27 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is alterations and extensions to dwellinghouse and formation of decked area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations and extensions to dwellinghouse and formation of decked area at 32 Southwood Avenue, Bournemouth, BH6 3QB, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. 7-2022-17864-A, dated 27 April 2022 and the plans submitted with it and subject to the conditions listed below.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the approved plans and in the application form, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P001; P009; P010; P011; P012; P013; P014; and P015.

Procedural Matter

2. I have adopted the description of development as set out in the decision notice as this provides a more succinct summary of the proposed development.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located on the eastern side of Southwood Avenue and comprises a substantial two storey (with roof accommodation) detached property with gardens to the front and rear. Similar detached and semi-

detached properties are to be found throughout the surrounding area, a number of which have been altered and remodelled to provide additional accommodation specifically at roof (second floor) level, largely secured through the use of dormer extensions. Some sites have also been redeveloped to provide flats including 34 Southwood Avenue (No.34), to the south of the appeal site. Other sites have been extended and converted into flats, including 36 – 40 Southwood Avenue, further to the south of the appeal site, currently under construction. The latter includes a large mansard roof at second floor level, a feature that is repeated on other properties within the area.

5. The appeal proposal involves the erection of ground floor side and rear extensions; a covered rear courtyard; formation of decking within the rear garden; a rear gable roof extension; the separation and reduction in size of an existing rear annex; a new side dormer; and new fenestration on the rear elevation. The Council do not object to a number of the proposed alterations including the ground floor extensions, courtyard, decking and separation of the rear annex, which they consider would either be subservient to the host and/or would not overwhelm the site and/or would not be prominent within the streetscene. I concur with the Council's findings in this respect.
6. The Council have also not raised an objection to the rear gable roof extension on the basis that this would not be visible and would thus have a negligible impact on the streetscene. Whilst I also concur with the Council's findings in this respect, the Council do contend that the proposed pattern of fenestration on the rear elevation, including the juxtaposition of the proposed dormer window, would be out of keeping with the host and the streetscene. I do not agree and find it difficult to understand how the proposed pattern of fenestration could be harmful when the Council accept that the rear gable extension would be acceptable due to its negligible impact on the host and streetscene.
7. As I observed on site, the rear of the host property is well screened from its neighbours and notably the main rear wall of the host, as proposed to be extended, is set well back from the rear elevations of No.34, to the south and 30 Southwood Avenue, to the north. As a result, there are limited, if any, public views of the rear and as with the proposed gable extension the new fenestration would, therefore, have no harmful impact on the streetscene. In relation to the host, the new fenestration forms an integral part of the overall design to modernise the rear elevation and relates well to the proposed works. I note that some of the new windows reuse existing openings and I agree with the Appellant that the proposed dormer window would, in cutting across the two wall materials (wood batons and render) provide an attractive design solution and link between the two. I am satisfied, therefore, that all of these proposed works would be sympathetic and in keeping with the host and would not result in any harm to the streetscene or character of the area.
8. The Council also contend that the proposed side dormer would be large, boxy and unsympathetic, accentuated by the use of timber batons and blank side and front elevations, which they allege would be detrimental and out of keeping with the host, streetscene and character of the area. The proposed dormer has an unconventional design in that its front and side elevations are blank, partly I assume to preclude any overlooking and partly to reflect the layout of the internal accommodation. This unconventional design is, as I mentioned earlier, carried forward on the rear, where the rear face of the new

- dormer would sit in line with the new gable extension, enabling the dormer window to link the two.
9. Whilst the proposed dormer would be large, it would be set well back from the front elevation to the host, as well as being sited below the ridge and above the eaves to the host. A large element of the roofspace, even as extended, would be retained. Although it would be visible within the streetscene, given the above and based on my observations on site, I am not convinced that the proposed dormers size, design and materials would be out of keeping or unsympathetic to the host property or to the character of the surrounding area. As I confirmed earlier, there are numerous examples of mansard additions and dormer windows within the surrounding area, the latter of differing designs and scale, several of which include flat roofs. In relation to the use of timber batons, I agree with the Appellant that this is a common material and there are several examples of the successful use of similar timber cladding within the area. Moreover, the use of timber adds interest to and relates well to the overall pallet of materials.
 10. I accept that the proposed dormer would result in a change to the appearance of the host property. However, I disagree with the Council and consider that the new dormer would be proportionate and subservient to the host, and would not result in an incongruous form of development. The proposed dormer would, in my view, sit reasonably comfortably on the side roof plane to the main roof (as extended).
 11. In relation to the Residential Extensions: A Design Guide for Householders (September 2008) (Design Guide), section 3.3 sets out the points (considerations) that will be used to assess the acceptability of roof alterations. Other than the point seeking to avoid dormers with horizontal emphasis and flat roofs, the proposed dormer would accord with the majority of the listed points. Overall, therefore, and mindful that flat roofed dormers are a common and accepted feature of the surrounding area, the proposal would broadly accord with the Design Guide. Even so, as the introduction to the Design Guide states it is intended as best practice guidance to assist in applying the policies of the local plan. Whilst the Design Guide outlines the Council's guidance, the document states that each case will be different and each case will need to be considered on its individual merits.
 12. Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2012) (BLP), also referred to in the Council's reason for refusal, seeks, amongst other requirements, to ensure that new development is well designed and of high quality, respecting both the site and its surroundings. A broadly similar approach is set out in paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (Framework), but the latter also states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change. Paragraph 44 of the National Design Guide (NDG) (January 2021) reinforces the Framework, in this respect, by emphasising 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. Both the Framework and NDG provide further support, therefore, for the findings I have reached above.

13. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would comply with policy CS41 of the BLP, the Design Guide and with the corresponding policies of the Framework.

Conditions

14. The Council has suggested various conditions which I have considered against the advice in the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance chapter on the use of planning conditions.
15. A condition requiring compliance with the approved plans and for materials to be as specified on the submitted plans and/or in the application form, are necessary and reasonable to secure a high-quality sustainable development.

Conclusion

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

G Roberts

INSPECTOR