



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: 14 October 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/22/3303814

154 Lytchett Drive, Poole, BH18 9NY

- 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 A Irish against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref. APP/22/00410/F, dated 28 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion with front and rear dormers to form second floor accommodation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for loft conversion with front and rear dormers to form second floor accommodation at 154 Lytchett Drive, Poole, BH18 9NY, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. APP/22/00410/F dated 28 March 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 match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: LP01-454-YPP Rev.1; SP01-454-YPP Rev.1; and PR01A-454-YPP.
 - 4) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted the windows within the proposed second floor rear (south) dormer, as shown on approved drawing No. PR01A-454-YPP, shall be fitted with obscured glazing which conforms to or exceeds Pilkington Texture Glass Privacy Level 3 to prevent external views, and the windows shall either be a fixed light or hung in such a way as to prevent the effect of the obscured glazing being negated by reason of opening. Once the obscured glazed windows are installed they shall be retained as such thereafter.

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 proposal involves the construction of front and rear dormers to provide additional accommodation within the existing roof space (second floor) of the host property. The new dormer on the front elevation would be slightly smaller than that on the rear, but both dormers would include pitch roofs with roof tiles, tile hanging and windows to match existing. The Council do not object to the new dormer on the rear elevation, but contend that the new dormer on the front elevation would harm the character and appearance of the area due to its location, mass and bulk.
4. The appeal site comprises a two storey semi detached property which forms part of an estate of similar largely two storey properties. The appeal site forms part of a small cul-de-sac, further examples of which are to be found throughout the estate. Within this cul-de-sac there are a mixture of house styles (types), with some properties constructed from brick or a mixture of brick and render and a variety of roof forms, ridge heights and elevational details, such as projecting bays and porches. There are also examples of dormer windows, some of which appear to be part of the original house designs or are more recent.
5. Within the above context, the proposed dormer window on the front elevation would be sited centrally within the roof plane, with its ridge no higher than the ridge to the main roof, located well above the eaves and set well back from the edges (sides) to the main roof. Whilst the windows within the new dormer would not be aligned with the existing windows below, the new windows, tile hanging and roof tiles would all match existing. The proposed design would also include, as described on the submitted plan, a 'cropped end' to match that on the main roof. As such, the proposed dormer would not appear out of keeping with the host property or the character of the surrounding area.
6. 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 level of change would be modest and that the proposed dormer would be proportionate and subservient to the host. The location, mass and bulk of the proposed dormer would not, therefore, dominate the front elevation and would not result in an incongruous form of development. Overall, the proposal would sit comfortably on the front roof plane to the host and as a well-designed and small addition would provide more interest and detail to the front elevation.
7. 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. I am satisfied, for the reasons set out above, that the proposed dormer would be compliant with the aims and objectives of that policy.
8. A similar approach to policy PP27 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.

9. Whilst there is some disagreement between the parties over the relevance of other dormers that exist in the area and suggestions that local plan policy has changed since these were approved, I have determined the proposal, as is required, on its individual merits and with regard to the aims and objectives of local and national policies. The latter includes policy BP8 of the Broadstone Neighbourhood Plan (2013 – 2033) (BNP) (June 2018), which states that well designed extensions and loft conversions will be supported where they complement the architecture of the building, use sympathetic materials and reflect the pattern of development. The appeal proposal would comply with the requirements of that policy and secure what is, in my view, a typical urban feature and an acceptable solution, in this instance, to accommodating additional living space and making effective use of the host property.
10. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would comply with part (1) (a) and part (2) of policy PP27 of the PLP, policy BP8 of the BNP and the corresponding policies of the Framework.

Conditions

11. 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. A condition requiring compliance with the submitted plans and for materials to match existing are necessary and reasonable to secure a high-quality development. I have, however, reworded the materials condition as the submitted plans and application form confirm that these will match existing. I have also added, as suggested, a condition that requires the windows within the proposed second floor dormer on the rear (south) elevation to be obscure glazed, so as to protect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, but slightly reworded it for clarity.

Conclusion

12. 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