



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2023

by S Harrington MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/W/23/3319666

11A Fortescue Road, Bournemouth BH3 7JT

- 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 Daniel Martin against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2023-15252-B, dated 13 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is alterations to first floor flat including loft conversion, roof extensions and rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The address provided on the application form included the address line 'Bournemouth Christchurch Poole'. I have taken the address in the banner above from the appellant's appeal form and the Council's decision notice, which accurately describes the appeal site address.
3. I have also taken the description of development in the banner heading above from the application form. However as '(Resubmission of planning reference: 7-2021-15252-A)' is not an act of development, I have removed this element.
4. The site has been subject to a recent appeal decision ¹, which was dismissed, for a similar development to that currently proposed. The previous scheme also proposed a loft conversion, albeit with a 'wrap around' dormer. I have taken the previous Inspector's findings into account in my decision. Nonetheless I have reached my own findings based on the circumstances of the present case.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site is located to the western side of Fortescue Road within an area of well-established residential properties. Within the area there is a variety of properties which exhibit some differences in roof form and in some instances have undergone extension and alteration. However, there is still an overall cohesive appearance. From my observations, I agree with the previous Inspector that the area exhibits an attractive rhythm to the street scene due to

¹ APP/V1260/W/22/3292001

linear built form, and generally consistent design characteristics which helps form the area's character, notwithstanding the variety of properties.

7. Furthermore, although some semi-detached dwellings have been altered in the area, including with hip to gable extensions thereby interrupting the visual symmetry of those pairs, the appeal site and attached neighbouring property retain a broad symmetrical appearance adding to the rhythm of the street scene. This is largely due to a combination of uninterrupted hipped roof form and double height bay windows and front gable, which, notwithstanding other nearby dwellings that may have been altered in the past, positively contributes to the character of the area.
8. The proposed hip to gable roof extension would lead to a loss of a key element that provides the broad symmetry that currently exists. I accept that from public views within Fortescue Road, the proposed dormer window would not be visible, and there are restricted opportunities to experience the symmetry of the existing building from this vantage point. Furthermore, the proposal would adjoin a detached building with a different roof form, and the appeal site is not in a consistent run of similar pairs of buildings in the same way as some other buildings in Fortescue Road. These factors reduce the visual harm of the proposal when viewed from vantage points along Fortescue Road.
9. However, the appeal site is prominent in views from Grafton Road, as well as being almost directly opposite the junction with De Lisle Road, therefore in direct line of sight when approaching Grafton Road from De Lisle Road. The rear roofs of the appeal building, and the resulting overall symmetry with the attached neighbour, is reflective of, and contributes to the established character of the area. The loss of this symmetry would be marked and have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of both the host building and area.
10. The proposed dormer window arrangement has been significantly reduced in scale to the previous appeal scheme. Nevertheless, the proposed dormer window is still of a scale that would dominate the main roof slope and would further erode symmetry between the host and attached property. Although I acknowledge the proposed dark finish and it is put to me that external materials would be high quality, the dormer would nevertheless be a prominent and noticeable feature.
11. I also observed other dormer windows and hip to gable extensions in the wider area including those brought to my attention by the appellant, and dormers in the rear elevations of properties along Fortescue Road facing Grafton Road. However, the few dormers that are facing Grafton Road are conspicuous and appear alien in the street scene due to the prevalence of uninterrupted pitch roofs. Given the predominant roofscape to the rear of these properties lack dormers, dormers do not form part of the established character of properties backing onto Grafton Road. The alien appearance of the few dormers that do exist, serves to highlight the importance of maintaining the roofscape in the area.
12. Despite the reduction in scale of dormer window from the previous proposal, the proposal as a whole, would still have little affinity with the positive aspects the existing roof form provides to the area. Although it is put to me that existing architectural details would be retained, I find the proposal would not be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host building and street

scene, particularly when viewed from sections of Grafton Road and De Lisle Road.

13. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. The scheme would conflict with Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (2012) which seeks to ensure that all development and spaces are well designed and of a high quality. The proposal would also conflict with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) in relation to achieving well designed places, as well as the guidance set out in Residential Extensions: A Design Guide for Householders (2008) which seeks to improve the quality of the built environment.

Other Matters

14. Even if there were no third-party objections to this development, my assessment of the effect of the development would be unchanged and a lack of objections is not a reason in itself to allow development that is unacceptable.
15. The proposal would provide additional, versatile, and improved living accommodation for the present and future occupants and it is put to me would benefit from outstanding energy efficiency credentials and low carbon fabrication. Nevertheless, while worthwhile, the benefits of the proposal would be limited given its scope and scale.
16. Against these benefits, I have found that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building and area. Such harm would be contrary to the development plan and Framework and is a matter that I attribute substantial weight. Consequently, the benefits of the scheme would not outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

17. The proposal conflicts with the development plan, read as a whole. No material considerations have been shown to have sufficient weight to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

S Harrington MA MRTPI

INSPECTOR