



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 September 2023

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13th October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/D/23/3324466

26 Norman Close, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 4ET

- 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 Stuart Drummond against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref P/HOU/2023/01050, dated 21 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 4 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as '*Install Balcony and French doors*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider street scene, and upon the living conditions of nearby occupiers at 17-20 (inclusive) Norman Close in terms of overlooking, and at 27 Norman Close with particular regard to noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The appeal property is a two-storey dwelling at the end of a short terrace of three (Nos 26, 27 and 28) and positioned at the head, and terminal end of, a residential cul-de-sac. Perpendicular to these, the immediate terraced properties to each side (Nos 17-20 to the north-west and 29-34 to the south-west) are similar in appearance, providing a pleasing cohesion to the street scene at this point, derived from the consistent and uniform building types including materials and fenestration patterns.
4. In common with others, the appeal property has a single-storey lean-to projection to the front. The proposal would replace the existing sloping roof of this with a balcony that would be enclosed with an obscure glazed screen and accessed from a pair of floor-to-ceiling glazed doors in place of an existing bedroom window.
5. The proposed changes at first-floor level would significantly alter the appearance of the dwelling, which sits prominent within the street scene, being exposed to full view in the vista looking east along Norman Close. The alternative proportions to the original window opening together with the

introduction of an enclosed balcony to the front elevation would be clearly seen from the public domain, appearing alien and incongruous in their setting. This would be to the detriment of the area's visual harmony and harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene. As such, by failing to maintain or respect the locally distinct character of the area, the proposal would conflict with Policies ENV10 and ENV12 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan 2011-2031 (LP), adopted in 2015, and with Policy D8 of the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan 2020-2036.

Living Conditions

6. The balcony would be shallow in depth, capable of being used as an outside seating area for only a very limited number of persons. From this space, there would be sight, at an elevated level, towards the front elevations of Nos 17-20 Norman Close. However, these properties have reasonably long front gardens and any view towards their forward-facing windows would be from an oblique angle and at a distance. I am not persuaded that the potential for someone using the outdoor space to look towards the bedroom windows of these neighbouring occupiers would be significant, or that it would result in any significant harm to any neighbours' living conditions in terms of privacy.
7. The balcony would be predominantly recessed behind the front elevation of the attached property at No 27 due to the staggered building line of the terrace. Furthermore, the nearest bedroom window to No 27 is set away from the shared boundary with the appeal property and at a slightly raised level owing to the topography of the area. Due to this relationship, and the restricted size of the balcony and limitations upon its use, I am satisfied that there would be little potential for these neighbour's living conditions to be harmed through noise or disturbance.
8. Overall, I am satisfied that there would be no conflict with LP Policy ENV16 as far as it seeks to ensure development does not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of any residential occupiers in terms of privacy or noise. For the same reasons there would be no conflict with the aims or objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, as revised in 2023, as far as it seeks to ensure developments achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Conclusions

9. Notwithstanding my findings as they relate to the effect of the proposal upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR