



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2023

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/23/3327033

5 Redan Close, Highcliffe, Christchurch, BH23 5DJ

- 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 Mrs Jill Gentle against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref. 8/23/0310/HOU, dated 3 May 2023, was refused by notice dated 12 July 2023.
 - The development proposed is enlargement of roof for first floor accommodation. Installation of rear dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the Application Form is different to that on the decision and I have adopted the latter as this is more concise.
3. The reason for refusal refers to the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (Framework) but since the refusal was issued the Framework has been revised, in September 2023. However, the Council have only referred to section 12 of the Framework and that section remains unchanged in the September 2023 version of the Framework.
4. An appeal against the Council's decision to refuse an application for Prior Approval to construct an additional storey on the host property was dismissed on 17 November 2022 (Ref. APP/V1260/D/22/3296543) (2022 Appeal). I have had regard to that decision in determining this appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

6. The appeal site is located on Redan Close which comprises a small cul-de-sac of seven single storey detached bungalows. Similar bungalows are to be found within the surrounding area together with three storey blocks of flats on Beacon Drive and two storey detached properties on, for example, Wharncliffe Road, the latter located to the rear (east) of the appeal site.
7. Redan Close has a formal but pleasant layout, with well maintained open frontages laid to lawn with some hedging and narrow driveways that provide

- access to individual single storey flat roofed garages. The Close appears to remain as originally built with only some modest alterations having taken place. This uniform design and appearance is a positive characteristic of the cul-de-sac and makes an important contribution to local distinctiveness.
8. The appeal proposal involves the enlargement of the roof to provide first floor accommodation. This would entail the construction of a rear dormer across the majority of the width of the property (at roof level) and an increase in the height of the existing ridge by approximately 2 metres.
 9. There is no roof accommodation, roof extensions or dormers on any of the existing properties that form part of Redan Close and the whole roofscape of the cul-de-sac remains, therefore, intact and uniform. All the existing properties have modest low pitched roofs, an original design feature of this small estate that contributes to the positive character and appearance of the area.
 10. Within that context, the proposed increase in the roof (ridge) height and the scale of the roof would, in my judgement, be excessive. That impact would be accentuated by the large scale flat roofed dormer proposed on the rear. By extending well above the existing ridge line and significantly increasing the pitch and scale of the existing roof, particularly evident when viewed from the side elevations, the proposal would introduce an incongruous addition that would be overly obtrusive within the streetscene, harmfully disrupting the rhythm of the existing roofscape.
 11. The proposal would not be subordinate and neither would it be proportionate to either the host property or the wider cul-de-sac. As I also observed on my site visit, it would be out of keeping with the modest dual low pitched roofs that are part of the established character of Redan Close. The proposal would be highly visible from public vantagepoints and would visually dominate its surroundings, and in doing so would fail to reflect the established pattern of development on Redan Close.
 12. Whilst I understand that the proposed enlargement of the roof would be less than that proposed in the 2022 appeal, the increase in the roof height and the scale of the roof would remain, in my view, unacceptable and would neither complement nor reflect the character of the cul-de-sac and its distinctive layout of modest bungalows with low pitched roofs.
 13. I appreciate that the appellant has sought to amend their proposal following discussions with the Council to respond to their concerns and that the development would meet the needs of a growing household. However, neither of these considerations nor any other personal circumstances affect the findings I have reached on this issue.
 14. In relation to the changes that have taken place elsewhere and the diversity of other areas, including the existence of larger properties nearby, I concur with the findings of the Inspector in the 2022 Appeal, that these areas are separate from the appeal site, they do not form part of its immediate local context and relate to street scenes that are very different to that which exists in Redan Close.
 15. The appellant has also referred to the fact that the appeal site is not located within a designated Conservation Area, that there are no Listed Buildings

nearby and that it does not form part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. That may be so, but that does not negate the requirement or the need for new development to be assessed in relation to whether it secures a high quality of design, whether it is compatible with its surroundings and its ability to retain and reinforce local character and distinctiveness, whilst at the same time supporting appropriate change.

16. My findings are supported by saved policy H12 of the Christchurch Local Plan 2001 (CLP), policy HE2 of the Christchurch & East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 – Core Strategy 2014 (CEDCS) and policy HWNP11 of the Highcliffe & Walkford Neighbourhood Plan 2023 (HWNP). Combined, these policies seek to permit new development and extensions where, amongst other requirements, the proposal is: compatible with or improves their surroundings in terms of scale, bulk, height and visual impact; it is of an appropriate character, scale and design for the locality; and retains and reinforces local character and distinctiveness.
17. In this particular case and as I have found above, the increased roof height and scale of the roof form would be inappropriate in this location, it would not be compatible with its surroundings and would be harmful to the uniform character and local distinctiveness of Redan Close, and thus contrary to the aims and objectives of the above referenced development plan policies.
18. Whilst I also note that interested parties have raised concerns in relation to overlooking, the submitted plans show that the new windows in the south elevation would be frosted/obscure glazed, which could be controlled by condition if I was mindful to allow the appeal. Although the windows within the new dormer would afford views from the first floor of the host (as extended), I am satisfied that the distance that separates these new windows from those of neighbouring properties would be acceptable and that together with existing boundary treatment and landscaping, there would be no harmful impact on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.
19. Accordingly, I find that the proposed enlargement of the roof and installation of a rear dormer would be contrary to saved policy H12 of the CLP, policy HE2 of the CEDCS, policy HWNP11 of the HWNP and paragraph 130 of the Framework.

Conclusions

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

G Roberts

INSPECTOR