



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: 31st October

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/23/3324308

493 Charminster Road, Bournemouth, BH8 9RD

- 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 & Mrs Sakhi Yousfi against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref. 7-2023-27680-A, dated 14 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 22 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single storey side/rear extension, internal alterations, and conversion of loft to habitable use with side dormer windows and a balcony to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The reason for refusal refers to the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (Framework) but since then 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.
3. I have taken the appellants name from the Application Form, as this appears to differ from that on the decision notice.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on: (a) the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area; and (b) the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site is located on Charminster Road and comprises a detached single storey bungalow with a low hipped roof. The hipped roof includes a small gable over a projecting bay on the front elevation, which is a feature repeated on some of the adjoining properties. The host property forms part of a row of five similar detached bungalows whose ridge heights and roof forms largely remain intact and uniform, albeit there are examples of small dormers on the side and rear of some properties. The frontages to these properties are enclosed by dwarf walls and hedging, with the front gardens largely used for parking. As a result and combined with the mature street trees, this part of the streetscene has an attractive and pleasant appearance. The surrounding

area comprises a mixture of similar single storey bungalows and two storey properties, although the latter do not form part of the same streetscene as the appeal site.

6. The Council do not raise any objection to the proposed single storey flat roofed side extension or to the ground floor element (extension) of the rear gabled projection. I concur with the Council's findings in this respect. The Council do object to the increase in height of the existing ridge and the replacement of the hipped roof with a gable ended roof that would broadly extend from the front of the property to the rear (as extended). Three dormer windows would also be added to the side elevations of the new roof and both gable ends would include large areas of glazing.
7. The proposed increase in the roof (ridge) height and the increase in scale and bulk resulting from the gable ended roof extensions, would, in my judgement, be excessive. That impact would be accentuated by the two large dormer windows on the south elevation (linked by a new flat roof) and the new large dormer window on the north elevation. By extending well above the existing ridge line and significantly increasing the length, scale, bulk and form of the existing roof, the proposal would introduce an incongruous addition that would be overly obtrusive within the streetscene and harmful to the built rhythm of the existing roofscape to the host and neighbouring properties.
8. The proposed enlarged and extended roof would, in fact, subsume the original modest hipped roof and would neither be subordinate nor proportional to the host property or to this part of the streetscene. This aspect of the proposal would, therefore, be out of keeping with the modest hipped roofs that are part of the established character of this section of Charminster Road. The extended roof would be highly visible from various public vantage points and would visually dominate its surroundings, and in doing so, would fail to reflect the established pattern of development on this part of the road.
9. Overall, the proposed roof would not result in a sympathetic extension to the host or to this part of the streetscene and that harm would, as I alluded to above, be accentuated by the large side dormers, as well as the large new glazing area within the front gable, which would be overly prominent. The dramatic change to the scale, bulk and form of the original hipped roof would destroy the character of the existing roof and the contribution it makes, with that of its neighbours, to the character and appearance of the area.
10. Accordingly, I find that the proposed enlargement and extension of the roof, new dormer windows and new glazing within the new front gable end would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area contrary to policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (BLP) (October 2012), section 3.3 (Roof alterations) of the Residential Extensions: A Design Guide (Design Guide) (September 2008) and paragraph 130 a), b) and c) of the Framework. These policies seek to ensure, amongst other requirements, that new development and extensions: are of a high quality of design; that through their scale, layout, siting, character and appearance are designed to respect the site and its surroundings; would not be detrimental to the built environment or to local distinctiveness; and do not lead to the removal of original roof forms, appear over dominant or detract from the streetscene.

Living conditions – neighbours

11. The Council's Delegated Report suggests that overlooking of neighbouring properties from the proposed side dormers could be controlled by a condition requiring these windows to be obscure glazed and non-openable below a certain height. However, there is no indication that this would be acceptable to the appellant and no such details are shown on the submitted plans. In view of this, the proposed dormer window to the left on the south elevation, which would serve a bedroom, would result, in my view, even at an oblique angle, in the overlooking of the rear garden of 491 Charminster Road (No.491), located to the south of the appeal site.
12. The Council do object to the proposed first floor balcony within the new rear gable end, which they contend would result in overlooking and a loss of privacy to the occupiers of No. 491 as well as the occupiers of 2 and 4 Sutton Road (No's 2 & 4), located at the rear (west) of the appeal site.
13. Whilst the new balcony would be recessed within the extended roofslope, it would provide a large covered terrace that would extend to the end of the new ground floor extension. Although it's unclear from the submitted plans it would appear that the balcony would be enclosed by a mid-height glazed balustrade. Even so, the proposed balcony would face directly towards the rear elevations and gardens to No's 2 & 4 and would provide direct views into the rear gardens of No. 491, as well as that of 495 Charminster Road. Existing boundary treatment would not prevent direct views from the proposed balcony into these rear gardens and this finding was reinforced by viewing the appeal site from the rear garden of No.491. From the latter, it was clear that the proposed balcony would be highly visible and would thus have direct views into the private amenity space of that property.
14. As the submitted plans show, the proposed balcony would provide an extensive area for the occupiers of the host property to stand on or sit in and could be used all year round, given the cover afforded by the extended roofslope, with direct views into the rear gardens of adjoining properties. These views would be new, from a high level and from a location where no such views exist at present. The result would be an unacceptable loss of privacy to the occupiers of those properties.
15. Accordingly, I find that the proposed rear balcony would give rise to an unacceptable level of overlooking resulting in significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties contrary to policy CS41 of the BLP, section 3.1 (Rear extensions) of the Design Guide and paragraph 130 f) of the Framework. These policies seek to ensure, amongst other requirements, that new development and extensions secure a high standard of amenity (living conditions) for both existing and future users.

Conclusions

16. 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