
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2024

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 4 April 2024.

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/23/3335966

4 Imbrecourt, Poole, BH13 7NP

- 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 P Osman against the decision of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref APP/23/01029/F, dated 8 September 2023, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as refurbishment and extensions to existing bungalow to create new floor to create 4 bed room house with garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. Imbrecourt is a short, discreet cul-de-sac comprised of about a dozen relatively large, detached bungalows set in generously sized plots and sited on both frontages and at its head. The dwellings may not follow a standard design, but nevertheless present a composite and unified picture with a limited palette of materials including painted render walls, some stone, with tiled, ridged and low-pitched roofs¹.
4. Some dwellings have been extended and altered, but where this has occurred, local characteristics have been considered and any changes made fit seamlessly into the street scene. The appeal dwelling is close to the head of the cul-de-sac and set back in its plot. From the rear, viewed through the tall pines, the garden overlooks part of a renowned golf course.
5. The changes proposed would transform the bungalow's appearance. The lower part of the altered bungalow would, in effect, act as a flat roofed plinth upon which a large rectangular box would be placed. A significant amount of large, panelled glazing would be introduced at both levels. The resultant building would be perceived as a two-storey dwelling of a distinctly angular, contemporary appearance.

¹ The 2 bungalows closest to the entrance differ slightly in that they are split-level to take account of the landform.

6. The appellant considers that the Council has failed to take adequate account of the changes that have taken place in nearby streets, where several instances of broadly comparative types of modern development have been introduced, with the Council's consent. The redevelopment of 5 ImbreCourt is also cited, where the former bungalow has been changed into a two-storey dwelling of a wholly different design. The Council, it is said, has failed to be consistent in its decision making.
7. To me, this proposal can be distinguished from most of the examples cited by the appellant. For example, 5 ImbreCourt is set well behind the cul-de-sac's frontage in a backland position, on lower land. It is sheltered from view from the cul-de-sac's carriageway and consequently has no impact on the street scene. The nearby streets share a common characteristic, which is absent from ImbreCourt. They display a significant, dense level of structural, natural landscaping comprised of mature trees, largely coniferous but interspersed with deciduous, which provide substantial screening. Here, the developments of modern appearance referred to by the appellant fit more appropriately into their verdant settings.
8. Large trees in ImbreCourt are largely confined to the rear gardens and act as a backcloth. With one exception, the dwellings in the cul-de-sac are therefore clearly exposed to view at the front. Consequently, the proposed development would stand out conspicuously. On account of its wholly contrasting design it would, in my view, be perceived as a visually jarring, disharmonious and discordant feature, harmful to the street scene. The proposal may well fit appropriately into another visual context, but not here.
9. I conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the street scene. Accordingly, a clear conflict arises with a principal requirement of Policy PP27 of the Poole Local Plan in that the design of new development ought to reflect or enhance local patterns of development and neighbouring buildings in most material respects.

Other matters

10. All other matters referred to in the representations have been considered, and I share the Council's view, for the reasons set out in the officer report, that the proposal would not harm neighbouring living conditions.
11. I have also taken account of the references to national policy, but in this instance, I consider the proposal to represent an inappropriate design in its spatial context. I therefore attach substantial weight to one of the Framework² provisions which says:

Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies..'

12. No other matter is of such strength or significance as to outweigh the considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR

² National Planning Policy Framework