



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 April 2024

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/24/3337501

83 Southbourne Overcliff Drive, Bournemouth, BH6 3NW

- 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 Chris Lyle against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref. 7-2023-20649-H dated 11 September 2023 was refused by notice dated 1 November 2023.
 - The development proposed is enlargement/extension of hipped roof including side dormers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have adopted the description of development as set out in the decision notice as this is more concise than that on the application form.
3. Since the application was refused planning permission, a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) was issued in December 2023. However, the relevant design policies of the Framework remain largely the same as those in the previous version, albeit some of the paragraph numbering has changed.
4. The Appellant has raised an issue in relation to the lawfulness of certain elements of the proposed development. Within the context of an appeal that simply seeks planning permission and is submitted under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (T&CPA), whether a development or part of it is permitted development and lawful is not a matter that I can address. It remains open to the Appellant to submit an application for a Lawful Development Certificate for proposed development under section 192 of the T&CPA if they consider that any part of the development is lawful, and the determination of that application would not be affected by my decision on this appeal.
5. A previous proposal for a roof extension to the host property was dismissed on appeal on 2 December 2019 (ref. APP/V1260/D/19/3233468) (2019 Appeal). I have had regard to that decision, as well as the subsequent applications to extend the roof to the host property, in determining this appeal.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

7. The appeal site comprises a large detached two storey property in a Georgian style located on the northern side of Southbourne Overcliff Drive. The host property appears to retain a number of its original features including a parapet wall at roof level behind which is a modest shallow pitched hipped roof. As with other properties on this side of the road, the host is prominent in views from public vantage points and in particular when approaching the site from either direction. Even though the pitched hipped roof is low key and set behind the parapet, as I observed on site, it is still visible in views from the road. As such, the host property has a cohesive and pleasing appearance and makes a positive contribution to the streetscene.
8. The north side of the road comprises similar detached two storey properties, some with accommodation in the roof. A number of these properties have been altered, extended or remodelled, particularly at roof level. In most cases these works have been undertaken sympathetically, are not visually dominant and integrate well with the design and appearance of the property in question. Even so, there is no uniform character with a variety of styles, built forms (including roofs), heights and materials. On the southern side of the road, the scale of development is more modest with a mixture of bungalows, chalet bungalows and some two storey properties.
9. The appeal proposal involves increasing the mass and volume of the existing pitched hipped roof. The proposed roof pitch would be steeper, it would extend closer to the front elevation and include two new large side dormers. The main ridge to the existing roof would be elongated and include a large expanse of flat roof.
10. Within the above context, I consider that the bulk, proportions, width and design of the enlarged and extended roof would be excessive and would result in an inappropriate addition to the host property. The proposal would not be sympathetic to the original design or character of the host. It would replace the existing well defined and low key hipped roof, with an incongruous and prominent addition that would be less subservient than the existing roof and out of keeping with the proportions of the host property. The excessive bulk and mass of the new roof would be accentuated by the proposed side dormers, both of which would have a significant height, depth and width. Both dormers would also include blank elevations, resulting in a poor and unsympathetic design feature.
11. The proposal would not represent a high quality design and would not integrate well or respect the character of the host. It would visually dominate the hosts appearance when viewed from the road. Whilst I note the approach of seeking to reflect the roof pitch/form as on 85 Southbourne Overcliff Drive (No.85), to the east of the appeal site, this is not the correct design approach to adopt in this instance in that the proposal results in an awkward juxtaposition with the original front elevation of the host. It would disrupt the rhythm of the existing modest roofscape and result in the loss of an integral roof feature.

12. Overall, the proposal would not sit comfortably on the host property leading to significant harm to the character and appearance of the host and surrounding area. The Appellant contends that the proposal would largely be screened from the road behind the retained parapet wall. I do not agree. As I indicated earlier, the existing hipped roof is already visible from the road and the increased bulk, proportions and unsympathetic design of the proposal would be even more visible and thus highly prominent within the streetscene.
13. Turning to the 2019 Appeal, that proposal involved a mansard roof extension which, by virtue of its excessive scale, increase in volume, elongated ridgeline and noticeable expanse of flat roof, the Inspector found to be visually dominant and a top heavy addition to the host. Whilst I accept that the current proposal involves a different style of extension, the changes, compared to the 2019 Appeal scheme, are modest. As I have explained above, even with these changes the appeal proposal remains unacceptable. In this respect the findings of the previous Inspector have not been addressed. The fact that No.85 has been extended and altered since the 2019 Appeal decision does not, for the reasons outlined above, affect my findings on this issue, bearing in mind also the requirement to assess each case on its individual merits.
14. As such, the proposal would conflict with policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2021) (BLP) where it requires development to secure a high quality of design and to respect or enhance local distinctiveness as well as the character and appearance of the site and its surrounds. That approach remains broadly consistent with paragraphs 135 and 139 of the Framework. The proposal would also conflict with various principles in the Residential extensions: A Design Guide for Householders (September 2008) (Design Guide) including: part 2.1 which requires extensions to respect the character of the house and not to dominate it; Part 2.2 which requires extensions to maintain or enhance the character of the house and be subservient to it; and, part 3.3 which requires roof alterations specifically dormers to be set well below the ridge line, well above the eaves and in from the sides, to avoid flat roofs and horizontal emphasis and to also avoid an unbalancing effect on the existing property through too many dormers.
15. The Design Guide also remains broadly consistent with the Framework. Whilst I accept that paragraph 135 of the Framework also states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change, the appeal proposal results in a development that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host and surrounding area. Although this assessment involves an element of judgement, there is, unfortunately, nothing innovative in the design of the proposal or any other considerations that would lead me to reach a different finding.
16. Accordingly, I find that the proposal would fail to comply with policy CS41 of the BLP, the Design Guide and the corresponding policies of the Framework.

Conclusion

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

G Roberts

INSPECTOR