



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2024

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/24/3342767

32 Ravine Road, Bournemouth, BH5 2DU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Donna Brooker against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref is 7-2023-25345-C.
 - The development proposed is described as '*Demolition of existing detached garage and 2 storey side projection - 2 Storey side extension to include replacement intergal [sic] garage - 2 Storey infill extension to front of property, including bay window to match existing - Single storey rear extension - Loft Conversion with Rear facing dormer with glazed doors onto inset balcony - 1no. front facing high level roof light - 2no. Side (South) facing high level roof lights - New glazing throughout*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. Ravine Road is a straight aligned residential street. No 32 is a two-storey detached property with a pedestrian access width gap to the side boundary with No 34, and a driveway to the opposite side between the boundary with No 30. Although there is no uniform separation distance between neighbouring buildings, there is clear spacing between most that creates a harmonious rhythm between the eclectic properties which prominently line both sides of the road behind consistently fairly shallow garden frontages. The proposal would involve alterations to the front and rear of the property including a two-storey side extension, a single-storey rear extension and a loft conversion with a rear facing dormer window.
4. The Council's *Residential Extensions – a Design Guide for Householders* (the Design Guide) was adopted in 2008 to provide advice to householders, architects, and builders on what is acceptable within the Borough. The Design Guide deals with side extensions at section 3.2. It recognises that the character of an area is often a result of the spaces between buildings and that side extensions which fill the gaps between properties, can result in a cramped appearance, or give a terracing effect that is harmful to the character of the

street. It advises, amongst other things, that side extensions should be set at least 1m off the side boundary of the property to ensure that the street does not become cramped and that in some instances the character of the street may require a greater distance is left to the boundary, particularly if a two-storey extension is proposed. The appeal proposal would extend No 32 sideways at two-storey, effectively filling the existing gap between the dwelling and the shared boundary with No 30. It would represent a type of development the Design Guide specifically seeks to avoid.

5. No 30 is set away from the boundary with the appeal property by the width of a side drive. As a consequence, the proposed side extension would not create any terracing effect with the neighbouring dwelling. Nevertheless, the encroachment of built form close to the boundary would change how No 32 is perceived within the street scene. It currently sits comfortable on its plot with space to both side boundaries. The loss of a gap to the common side boundary with No 30 would make the dwelling appear cramped within its setting. This would detract from the rhythm and harmony of the street scene. In addition, allowing No 32 to close the gap would make it difficult to resist any similar future proposed change to No 30. This would have the potential of leading to further harm.
6. By failing to respect the site and its surroundings there would be conflict with Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy 2012. There would also be conflict with Policy BAP1 of the Boscombe & Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan, adopted November 2019, as far as it requires proposals for development to reflect the character of an area, including the spaces between buildings. For similar reasons there would be conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed and beautiful places.
7. The appellant has referred to various other properties in the locality to support their appeal. Whilst there is no regimented degree of spacing between neighbouring properties along Ravine Road, the gaps that exist are important defining features of the street scene. I accept that there are some examples where properties extend up to one of their side boundaries at two-storey but these are by far the exception. Moreover, where they do exist, particularly at Nos 6 and 8 which have been specifically drawn to my attention, there is no evidence to show that the arrangement is the result of any past extension. My impression, based on my own observations during my site visit, was that these two properties were originally constructed in this manner. I saw that the re-development at 9 Ravine Road, comprising two pairs of semi-detached dwellings under construction at the time of my visit, maintained adequate separation between each of the two buildings and between each of their neighbours. Examples at Montague Road and Portman Crescent are slightly further afield and where houses are more deeply recessed with less rhythm to the local development pattern. Overall, I saw nothing to alter my view that the loss of space to the side of the appeal property would detract from the character and appearance of the street scene.
8. The Council raised no objections in principle to other aspects of the appeal proposal. I have no reason to disagree. I have noted their reservation over the potential impact of a second-floor balcony to the rear due to some apparent discrepancies in the plans but, given my conclusion on the main issue, I have no reason to consider this matter further.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR