



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2024

by G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/24/3344270

2 Stourcliffe Avenue, Bournemouth, BH6 3PT

- 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 Mr S Gibson against the decision of BCP Council.
 - The application Ref is 7-2024-15719-B.
 - The development proposed is internal alterations, first floor extension to side and modify roof enlarging existing loft living area with the addition of dormer to side aspect.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a detached two storey property with accommodation in the roof located on the corner of Stourcliffe Avenue with Pine Avenue. The site includes a detached single storey garage with hipped roof to the north of the main house, fronting Pine Avenue and what appears to be a single storey flat roofed outbuilding, to the west of the main house. The host property has been extended on the ground floor, to the side and rear and the loft converted to provide additional living areas. It is already, therefore, a large 6 bedroomed detached property.
4. The surrounding area includes predominantly two storey detached properties, although there are some new infill developments of flats as well as properties that have been extended and converted into flats. Most of the surrounding properties have hipped roofs, some of which include projecting gable ends over ground and first floor bay windows, as on the host property. The properties do vary in terms of their detailing, form, design and pallet of materials. A number have also been extended to the side, front, rear and at roof level.
5. Dealing firstly with the proposed first floor side extension, this would be sited on top of the existing lean-to ground floor extension. The proposed eaves of the new extension would align with that of the existing main roof to the host, with its proposed ridge sitting marginally below that of the main roof. As such, I consider the height and bulk of the new extension to be excessive. It would dominate this part of the streetscene and result in an inappropriate addition to the host property. The new extension would not be subservient to the host,

which, as I confirmed earlier, already comprises a large detached property in comparison to some of its neighbours.

6. The harmful impact of the proposed extension is accentuated by the appeal sites corner location, which results in the new addition being highly visible from various public vantage points on Stourcliffe Avenue and Pines Avenue. I also agree with the Council that the clipping of the proposed roof at the rear would introduce an awkward design feature that would be highly visible and out of character with the prevailing roofscapes in the area.
7. Turning to the roof alterations, these include partial front and rear hip to gable extensions that would create a continuous flat roof line, which, I agree with the Council creates a boxy and horizontal emphasis to the roof, as extended. As the front, side and rear elevations of the host are highly visible, the result would be a roof form that would be over dominant and out of character with the streetscene.
8. I accept that the proposed side dormer would be sited below the ridge and above the eaves to the host's main roof, that the windows would align and that the materials would match existing. However, the flat roof to the dormer and its horizontal emphasis would, combined with the other roof alterations, further highlight the excessive bulk and height of the proposal and the extent to which it would be out of keeping with the built rhythm of most of the roofscapes within the surrounding area.
9. As such, the proposal would not sit comfortably on the appeal site leading to significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area.
10. In view of the above findings, the proposal would conflict with policy CS41 (Quality Design) of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (October 2012) (BLP). This policy requires, amongst other matters, that new development secures a high quality design, respects or enhances local distinctiveness as well as the character and appearance of the site and its surrounds. That approach remains broadly consistent with paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (NPPF).
11. The proposal would also conflict with various principles of the 'Residential extensions: A Design Guide for Householders' (September 2008) (Design Guide) including: parts 2.1 and 3.2 which require extensions to respect the character of the house and not to dominate it; Parts 2.2 and 3.2 which require extensions to be subservient to the host; and, part 3.3 which requires new dormers to avoid flat roofs and horizontal emphasis, and to retain as much as possible of the original roof form.
12. I accept that the Design Guide should be applied flexibly, but the proposal does conflict with a number of its principles and its general guidance remains, in my view, broadly consistent with that in the NPPF. Whilst paragraph 135 of the latter does state 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 that assessment involves an element of judgement, there is, unfortunately, nothing innovative in the design of the appeal proposal or any other considerations that would lead me to reach a different finding on this issue.

13. The Appellant has referred to examples of other extensions and roof alterations within the area, including a planning permission to extend 4 Stourcliffe Avenue (No.4), to the south of the appeal site, as well as the new side dormers that have been constructed on that property. I have not been provided with any detailed planning background to the permission referred to, so I am unable to comment on this or reach a finding on any direct comparisons with the appeal proposal. In relation to the dormers, I understand that they may have been built under permitted development and were not subject to planning control. These dormers are, in my view, of a poor design and are large, which combined with their flat roofs and horizontal emphasis visually dominate the roof of No.4.
14. Reference has also been made to a two storey extension built at the rear of 5 Pine Avenue (No.5). However, as I observed on site, this is also of a poor quality design that should not, in my view, be followed or replicated. The extension does not appear subservient to the host and has resulted in the original form and style of the property being lost. Even so, there is again no detailed planning background before me and no indication of the local circumstances that led to this approval, which would be required to assess if it were in any way comparable or relevant to the appeal proposal.
15. I can, of course, only consider the proposal that is before me and, as is required, determine it on its individual merits having regard to the prevailing development plan policies and guidance.
16. None of the above examples affect, therefore, the findings I have reached on this issue.
17. Whilst I also sympathise with the Appellants personal circumstances and their need to provide additional accommodation for a growing family so they can remain in the area, neither this nor any other considerations are sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified. I also accept that there were no objections to the proposal, but that does not negate the need for it to be properly assessed against the development plan and NPPF.
18. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would fail to comply with policy CS41 of the BLP, various principles in the Design Guide and the corresponding policies of the NPPF.

Conclusion

19. 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