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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 April 2025

by **G Roberts BA (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 24 April 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/25/3358744**

**10 Wren Close, Christchurch, BH23 4BD**

- 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 John Arnell against the decision of BCP Council.
  - The application Ref is 8/24/0515/HOU.
  - The development proposed is enlargement of roof to provide first floor accommodation. Front and rear dormers. Erection of two storey side extension, single storey side and rear extensions.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for enlargement of roof to provide first floor accommodation. Front and rear dormers. Erection of two storey side extension, single storey side and rear extensions at 10 Wren Close, Christchurch, BH23 4BD in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 8/24/0515/HOU and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions listed in the Annex to this decision.

### Preliminary Matters

2. I have adopted the description of development from the decision notice as this is more accurate in highlighting the various elements of the proposed development.
3. On 12 December 2024 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). However, the policies that are relevant to this appeal have not changed, albeit some of the paragraph numbering has. For these reasons, I have not invited the parties to comment on the revised NPPF.
4. On 13 November 2024 the Council granted planning permission on the appeal site to enlarge the roof to provide first floor accommodation with front and rear dormers, together with single storey side and rear extensions (ref. 8/24/0485/HOU) (2024 Approval). This permission is a material consideration and I have referred to it in my decision, where relevant.

### Main Issue

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

### Reasons

6. The appeal site is located at the eastern end of a small cul-de-sac of detached properties. The properties comprise a mixture of single storey bungalows and

chalet style bungalows. Some of the properties have been altered and extended at roof level, to the side and rear and there are also examples of outbuildings. The host property has a chalet design with a hipped roof, large flat roofed dormer on the front and a smaller dormer on the rear.

7. To the west is 8 Wren Close (No.8) a chalet style bungalow with gable ended roof and a gable end that projects forward of the main roof. To the south is 12 Wren Close (No.12) a much wider chalet style bungalow with dormers on the front and a gable end facing the host property (with a small hip at the ridge).
8. Overall, Wren Close has no uniform character or style with properties varying in terms of their form (including roof form), layout, scale, massing, design and pallet of materials. Roof forms vary from hips to gable ends, with flat roofs (on side and rear extensions) and dormers that also differ in terms of their design, scale and roof coverage.
9. The appeal proposal involves enlarging the roof to provide additional first floor accommodation, with front and rear dormers, a two storey side extension and single storey side and rear extensions.
10. The Council contend that the appeal proposal is contrary to policy HE2 of the Christchurch & East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy (CEDLP) (2014). This states that development will be permitted if it is of a high quality and is compatible with or improves its surroundings in terms of, amongst others, layout, scale, bulk, height, materials and visual impact. The Council also contend that there is conflict with policy H12 of the Borough of Christchurch Local Plan (BCLP) (2001), which states, in relation to extensions, that these will be permitted provided they are of an appropriate character, scale, design and materials to the immediate vicinity, there is no adverse effect on neighbours amenities and they do not result in the loss of important trees or landscape features. There is no reference in the reason for refusal or the Council's Delegated Report to any supplementary design guidance for extensions.
11. More up to date policy guidance is provided in paragraph 135 of the NPPF which states that being sympathetic to local character should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation or change. The policies of the CEDLP and BCLP predate those in the NPPF as well as those in the National Design Guide (NDG) (January 2021). Paragraph 44 of the latter reinforces the NPPF by emphasising that well designed places do not need to copy their surroundings and that it is appropriate for new development to include innovation and change to reflect how we live today.
12. Dealing firstly with the rear of the host property, the proposed single storey flat roofed extension and small extension to the garage (with shallow hipped roof) are not dissimilar to the extensions in the 2024 Approval. Whilst I accept that the main flat roofed extension is wider, as a result of a further two storey side extension to the east (referred to below), this element remains, in my view, acceptable. Both the rear and garage extensions are single storey and would have no impact on the outlook or living conditions of No's 8 or 12. In relation to the proposed dormer, with shallow hipped roof, this again replicates a similar dormer in the 2024 Approval. I accept that this dormer is again wider, to reflect the new two storey side extension, but it remains proportional to the roof of the host (as extended) and would not have any impact on the outlook of neighbouring properties.

13. As I observed on site, the host has a large rear garden that is enclosed by a Brook and extensive hedging and trees, effectively screening any public or neighbour views of the rear. As such, the proposed rear additions would not be visually prominent or intrusive and would secure acceptable building relationships with No's 8 and 12.
14. Turning to the front elevation of the host, the proposed hip to gable extension facing No.8 would be designed as per the 2024 Approval, other than the fact that the ridge height would increase I understand from some 6.7 metres in the approved scheme to some 6.8 metres on the appeal scheme. This compares with an existing ridge height of some 6.1 metres. The difference in ridge height between the approved and appeal scheme is negligible, and the difference compared with existing is also modest and acceptable given the varying ridge heights on adjoining and other properties within the Close.
15. The principal change on this elevation compared to the 2024 Approval arises from the new two storey side extension on the eastern side of the host property. This would result in built development moving closer to the common side boundary with No.12 compared to the 2024 Approval. Even so, this new extension, with gable end, would I understand be some 2.5 metres wide and represents a modest extension to both the original property and to the 2024 Approval. There would still remain a reasonable gap between the new extension and side elevation to No.12. Further support for the acceptability of this building relationship is provided by the fact that the side elevation of No.12 is at right angles to the host property. Also, that No.12's main front and rear elevations face west and east respectively, that it lies to south of the appeal site and that there are no windows within the upper level of its side elevation.
16. As a consequence, the width, length and height of the proposed two storey side extension would in my view be modest. As such, the scale, massing and form of the proposed extension would also be modest. I accept that it would result in a further material change to the side and front elevation of the host, but I am satisfied that the increase in mass and form would not be significant or harmful to the host property or to the streetscene. I am also satisfied that the proposal would not result in a visually intrusive or overbearing form of development. It would not be cramped given that it maintains reasonable gaps with its neighbours and as I noted on site other properties in the Close already extend across the width of their plots.
17. The above findings also apply to the proposed front dormer. The 2024 Approval has a hipped dormer located centrally within the roof (as extended). The proposal is now for a flat roofed dormer with a width I understand of some 5 metres compared to 3.1 metres, in the approved scheme. I accept the dormer is larger but it remains centrally located within the roof, as extended. It would align with the new porch below and sit above the eaves, below the extended ridge and well in from the side gable ends. As such, the proposed dormer would be proportional to the hosts roof and front elevation, as extended, and would not be visually dominant or harmfully affect its appearance or that of the surrounding area. Indeed, I consider the flat roof design to be an improvement on the 2024 Approval. The new dormer is similar to that on 7 Wren Close (to the south of the appeal site) and integrates better with the contemporary remodelling of the host property.
18. Whilst I accept that the Appellant's submitted 3D visuals need to be treated with caution, they reinforce my findings that the proposed extensions are not ad hoc or

discordant features, and neither do they result in any harmful relationships with neighbouring properties. Overall, I am satisfied that the impact of the appeal proposal on the host property and the streetscene would not be harmful, that the new extensions are sympathetic and would sit comfortably on the appeal site.

19. Accordingly, I find that the appeal proposal would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the host property or to neighbouring properties or to the streetscene. It would thus be compliant with policy HE2 of the CEDLP, policy H12 of the BCLP as well as the corresponding policies of the NPPF and NDG.

### **Other Matters**

20. Concerns have been raised by interested parties in relation to loss of light, privacy, impact on trees, the Brook and wildlife, and flooding. There is no detailed evidence before me to suggest that any of these concerns would result in material harm and I note they are not matters that the Council have specifically raised in their reason for refusal. In terms of the impact on trees, wildlife and the Brook, these matters were addressed by the Appellant at the application stage and through agreement with the Council, and any recommendations from the submitted assessments can be adequately controlled by conditions.

### **Conditions**

21. The Council has suggested several conditions which I have considered against the advice in the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) chapter on the use of planning conditions.
22. Conditions requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, specified materials and tree protection measures, are reasonable and necessary in the interests of securing a high quality development and to safeguard the health and future of protected trees. Conditions to require finished floor levels to reflect existing, the submission and approval of the siting of services and soakaways and the implementation of the recommendations of the bat survey, are also reasonable and necessary to ensure adequate physical protection to the protected trees, in the interests of flood prevention and improving local biodiversity.
23. Similarly, I am satisfied that conditions requiring certain windows to be obscure glazed and fixed shut above a certain height and to prevent the use of flat roofs as terracing or a balcony, are reasonable and necessary to protect the living conditions on neighbouring occupiers. However, I have amended some of the wording and omitted the reference to the rooflights serving the master bedroom as I am not convinced that these windows would lead to any harm in this respect.

### **Conclusion**

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

*G Roberts*

INSPECTOR

### **Annex – Conditions**

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be as specified on the approved plans and in the application form.
- 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 22110-00-02; 22110-00-03 Rev.A; 22110-00-04 Rev.A.
- 4) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted Tree Report ref. GH2394 and Tree Protection Plan ref. GH2394b, both dated 11/09/2023, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.
- 5) Notwithstanding the details already submitted, full plans and particulars showing the final siting of the services and soakaways shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works on the site.
- 6) Other than for the erection of tree protection, before any equipment, materials or machinery are brought onto the site, a pre-commencement site meeting between the Arboricultural and Landscape Case Officer and the Site Manager shall take place to confirm the methods of protecting trees on site during development in accordance with the submitted Tree Report ref. GH2394 and Tree Protection Plan ref. GH2394b, both dated 11/09/2023. The tree protection fencing shall be retained until the development is completed. Nothing shall be placed within the tree protection fencing, nor shall any ground levels be altered or excavations made without the written consent of the Local Planning Authority.
- 7) The floor levels within the extensions hereby permitted shall be set no lower than the finished floor levels in the existing dwelling.
- 8) All the recommendations contained within the Phase 2 Bat Survey, undertaken by Orb Ecology Ltd, V2 dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 2023, shall be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and retained thereafter where necessary.
- 9) Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the bedroom 2 windows on the west side elevation shall be glazed with obscure glass which conforms to or exceeds Pilkington Texture Glass Privacy Level 3 and no part of the windows that is less than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which they are installed shall be capable of being opened. Once the windows have been installed the obscure glazing shall be retained thereafter.
- 10) The flat roof of the single storey rear and side extensions hereby permitted shall not be used as a balcony, roof terrace or veranda.

**End of Annex.**