

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2016

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 26 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/16/3153322
55 Woodland Drive, Hove, Brighton BN3 6DF

- 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 Chambers against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application, Ref. BH2016/00549, dated 12 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 11 April 2016.
 - The development proposed is the remodelling of the existing dwelling including alterations and raising of the roof height to facilitate the creation of an additional storey. Erection of a porch and canopy and the creation of a garage at lower ground floor level to the front elevation. Alterations and enlargement of the existing rear patio; creation of access steps to either side of the dwelling; revised fenestration and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the remodelling of the existing dwelling including alterations and raising of the roof height to facilitate the creation of an additional storey. Erection of a porch and canopy and the creation of a garage at lower ground floor level to the front elevation. Alterations and enlargement of the existing rear patio; creation of access steps to either side of the dwelling; revised fenestration and associated works at 55 Woodland Drive, Hove, Brighton in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. BH2016/00549, dated 12 February 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision;
 - 2) The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No. Series 14-011: Plan Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24;
 - 3) The materials to be used in the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of Woodland Drive.
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Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal property occupies a corner position in Woodland drive at its junction with Deanway. The latter has a quite different appearance to Woodland Drive as the dwellings are three storey rather than two and set into a slope with an essentially open plan frontage lacking the mature vegetation of the front gardens in Woodland Drive.
4. However despite these differences the plots essentially follow the curve of the south eastward turn from Woodland Drive into Deanway without any break in the linear development pattern. As a result, the appeal dwelling is read with No. 24 Deanway as well as No. 57 Woodland Drive. I acknowledge that the continuity of vision is to some extent interrupted by the frontage hedge and trees, but nevertheless in views of No. 55 from the opposite side of the road the apex of the north western corner of the roof of No. 24 Deanway is both visible and noticeably higher. Furthermore much of the roof plane on the north side of that property is also visible in those views.
5. The appeal scheme proposes a 2.2m increase in ridge height to create three storey accommodation and this would be 0.7m higher than that of No. 57 and 1.7m lower than No. 24. The Council's view is that the outcome would be one of an unduly dominant and incongruous appearance at odds with the Woodland drive streetscene. However, because I consider that No. 55 reads with No. 24 as well as with No. 57, and also taking into account the break in the continuity of this side of Woodland Drive formed by the entrance to Deanway, I conclude that the altered dwelling would be an acceptable transition between the properties on either side.
6. The Council has also criticised the front canopy but there are a variety of frontage treatments in the area and in this particular context I consider that it would make little or no difference to the effect of the development. Overall, I find that the appeal scheme would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of Woodland Drive in conflict with Policy CP12 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One 2016; saved Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005, and Section 7: 'Requiring Good Design' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. Because of this conclusion there would also clearly be no harm caused to the setting of the adjoining Woodland Drive Conservation Area.
7. I shall therefore allow the appeal. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans will avoid uncertainty. A condition in respect of external materials will ensure that the extensions and alterations are in keeping with the host dwelling.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR