

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2016

by A J Mageean BA (Hons) BPI PhD MRTPI

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

Decision date: 19th December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/16/3157255
136a Woodlands Drive, Hove, BN3 6DE

- 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 Munday against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2016/01119, dated 31 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is first floor extension to provide master bedroom suite and minor internal alterations over existing kitchen area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for first floor extension to provide master bedroom suite and minor internal alterations over existing kitchen area at 136a Woodlands Drive, Hove in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref BH2016/01119, dated 31 March 2016, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 2702-01; 2702-02; 2702-03; 2702-04; 2702-05.
 - 3) The materials used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The windows on the side elevations of the development hereby permitted shall be obscure glazed and non-opening, unless the parts of the window/s which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed, and thereafter permanently retained.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the building and the Woodland Drive Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within the Woodland Drive Conservation Area. This area is characterised by detached dwellings set in good sized plots with particularly long rear gardens. Some mature vegetation on front and rear
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boundaries provides an attractive setting. The road has a north to south downward gradient, and the land also rises to the west.

4. The dwellings on the western side of the road, in which the appeal property is located, have a distinct mock-Tudor style. Whilst there is some individual variation in the appearance of each dwelling, they generally include steeply pitched tiled roofs with front facing gables, gable dormers, and timber frame with plaster and brick nogging detailing to the front elevations. These front elevations appear relatively unaltered, though some side and rear additions are visible from the road frontage.
5. To the rear these properties are less elaborate, though distinctive tall chimneys and part render/part brick finishes provide some unity to their appearance. The appeal property has an existing single storey rear extension which projects into the garden from the north western half of the rear elevation of this property. This is hidden from view from the road frontage, and to the rear it appears as a reasonably discreet addition due to both the lower level of the property in relation the rear garden which rises to the west and also the presence of high boundary fences.
6. The proposal is for a first floor extension to create a master bedroom suite over the existing single storey extension. This proposal would have a similar part-pitched, part-flat roof form to that of the existing single storey extension. This would involve the loss of an existing rear facing dormer window, with the new higher level roof adjoining the property with the same ridge height as the existing lower level roof ridge of the original dwelling. A large window and Juliette balcony would be present at first floor level on the rear elevation, and a number of additional side windows are also proposed.
7. The extension would appear as a significant rear addition to the northern elevation of this property, and to a lesser extend its southern elevation. Whilst it would not be visible when viewed from directly in front of the property, it would be visible in glimpsed views from the street.
8. The Council have concerns about the nature and size of this addition, suggesting that it would not relate well to the existing dwelling or the wider Conservation Area. However, my view is that in building over the existing rear addition and connecting with the original roof ridge, the proposal has sought to integrate what would be a sizable addition with the existing property.
9. I accept that the flat area of roof would be more visible and appear somewhat truncated. However the fact that this would replicate the existing single storey roof profile, and would have similar gradients to the existing roof, would assist with its assimilation. I also accept that there would be some misalignment of eaves levels as the result of this addition, though my view is that this would not be an unduly disruptive element in what is already a varied roof form. Furthermore, as the design and detailing of the extension would seek to replicate the existing rear and side elevations this would also assist in its integration with the existing building. Overall therefore the extension would not detract from the original form of the building or be unduly intrusive in the wider Conservation Area.
10. For these reasons I do not consider that this proposal would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of this building, or the wider Woodland Drive Conservation Area. It would therefore not conflict with the Brighton and

Hove Local Plan 2016 which at Policy QD14 requires extensions to be well designed and to take into consideration the character of the property and surrounding area. It would also comply with Policy HE6 and the Supplementary Planning Document SPD12 2013 which require proposals to preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas.

Conclusion

11. I have found in this case that the proposal would not be unacceptable in terms of its effect on the character of the dwelling or surrounding Conservation Area. This scheme would therefore be acceptable when assessed against the development plan and National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.
12. To ensure a satisfactory appearance the development should be carried out in accordance with approved plans, and the external materials should match the existing house. It is also appropriate to require that the windows on the side elevations be obscure glazed and non-opening in order to protect the privacy of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. Subject to these conditions, the appeal should succeed.

AJ Mageean

INSPECTOR