
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 March 2017

by Nicola Davies BA DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 4 April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/W/16/3162660

Maisonette 42 Dyke Road Drive, Brighton BN1 6AJ

- 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 Sam Turton against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2016/05133, dated 27 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 October 2016.
 - The development proposed is a loft conversion incorporating rear dormer and front rooflights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue raised in respect of the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host building and the area.

Reasons

3. There is a degree of uniformity to the roofs of this long row of terraced properties, although this has been interrupted by some large dormer roof extensions. Despite this, the properties maintain a continuity of appearance with the roofs comprising chimneys, dividing roof parapets and roof tiles. The roofline of the terrace is stepped reflecting the declining land gradient of Dyke Road Drive from North West to South East. I observed that roofs to the North West are positioned slightly higher than that of the appeal property, however the staggering forms part of the rhythm of this long residential terrace.
 4. The requirement of the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 12 'Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations' indicates that dormer roof extensions should not occupy the full width of the roof and have the appearance of an extra storey on top of the building. It further advises that the dormer should be kept as small as possible and clearly be a subordinate addition to the roof, set appropriately in the roof space and well off the sides, ridge and eaves of the roof. Furthermore, the supporting structure should be kept to a minimum with no large areas of cladding and should not be substantially larger than the window itself.
 5. Although the rear dormer would be set off the ridge line, eaves and south east side roof parapet, the dormer would occupy nearly all the rear roof slope. The
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dormer would be of a substantial size and would be a dominant visual feature upon the host building and would appear as an extra storey at the top of the building. Although the windows would be of similar size and align to those below in the existing rear elevation, the design of the dormer would have large areas of cladding with disproportionately small windows to its overall size. The dormer roof extension would not be a subordinate feature within this roof slope as it would dominate the original building and be visually intrusive as a result of its significant size and appearance.

6. The applicant has highlighted other examples of large full width rear dormer roof additions to properties close by. These are located upon rear roofs to the South East of the appeal site but further along the terrace in the same direction the original rear roof slopes largely remain unaltered with only a few dormer roof extensions in place. I observed that the rear roofs to the North West are uninterrupted. The full width rear dormer roof extensions close by vary in design and appeared to me, without having any other substantive evidence before me that indicates otherwise, to be well established additions. I accept that these existing dormer roof extensions have interrupted the original rear roof slopes which form part of the attractive character and appearance of this long terrace of residential properties. However, despite the roofs to the North West being positioned slightly higher than that of the appeal property, the insertion of a further large dormer roof extension of poor design would, in my opinion, both harm the visual appearance of the host building and would add a further discordant and harmful extension to the roof slopes of this long terrace.
7. The appellant has drawn my attention to a 2007 planning application in which the Council has granted a planning permission for a loft conversion at No 39 Dyke Road Drive. However, that planning permission pre-dated the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the adoption of the Council SPD 12. The policy context in which this proposal should be assessed has therefore been updated. The proposal should therefore be considered in accordance with the current development plan policies that are in place.
8. I acknowledge there are no residential properties bordering the rear of the terrace. I also accept the proposed dormer roof extension would not be prominent in views from Preston Road or the conservation area on the opposite side or in skyline views from Preston Park, notwithstanding any development that may take place within the gap between the appeal site and Preston Road. Nonetheless, it would be visible in outlook from existing developments in close proximity to the appeal site and in views from the rear gardens of neighbouring properties.
9. Notwithstanding some local support for the proposal, I consider the proposed development would adversely affect the character and appearance of the existing building and the general area.
10. For the above reasons the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, and would be contrary to Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and SPD 12. These seek extensions or alterations to existing buildings, including the formation of rooms in the roof, to be well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the property to be extended, adjoining properties and to the surrounding area, amongst other matters. The proposal would also conflict with the aims of paragraphs 17, 56 and 58 of the

Framework that aim to secure high quality design that responds to local character and that contributes to making places better for people.

Other Matters

11. I note the appellant's wish to optimise the property and provide extended living accommodation enabling his family to remain resident within a school catchment area. This would be a benefit of the development. Furthermore, I acknowledge that increasing property prices may be pricing less affluent families out of the area. Whilst I sympathise with the personal circumstances of the appellant and the future accommodation needs of his family, I am mindful that the harm identified would be permanent and is not outweighed by the appellant's particular circumstances.

Conclusions

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nicola Davies

INSPECTOR