



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2017

by Mr Kim Bennett DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C3810/D/17/3179406

162 Littlehampton Road, Ferring, West Sussex BN12 6PH

- 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 Tony Maio against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref FG/42/17/HH, dated 20 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 13 June 2017.
 - The development proposed is a garage at front with bedroom above.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a garage at front with bedroom above at 162 Littlehampton Road, Ferring, West Sussex BN12 6PH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref FG/42/17/HH, dated 20 March 2017, 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: TM101; TM102; TM103; TM104; TM105; TM106 and TM107.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of 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 the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property comprise a large detached house set well back from the southern side of Littlehampton Road which is a busy dual carriageway at this point. It is one of a row of detached houses, all of varying designs but which are similarly set back along the same approximate building line. However, all the properties are well screened from the road by front boundary enclosures which vary from high brick walls to hedges. To the east of the site are the rear gardens of properties in Ancren Close, which are predominantly bungalows and set in smaller plots.

4. Planning permission was granted for a front single storey garage in January 2017¹ which would have extended forward of the front elevation for a length of some 12metres. The current proposal is to construct first floor accommodation within an enlarged roofspace but over the same ground floor footprint as previously approved. In that respect, the Council is concerned that whilst the approved scheme would be well screened, the first floor of the current proposal would be readily visible and would be at odds with the prevailing character and siting of other properties along Littlehampton Road.
5. Whilst I understand the Council's concerns, the approved garage has already established the principle of significant built development forward of the front elevation on the site, and I note that apart from being a sizeable footprint, the approved scheme also would have had a substantial pitched roof with a ridge height at eaves level to the main house.
6. The proposed development, incorporating a larger and steeper pitched roof form, would increase that ridge height slightly, although it would still be below the height of the front gables and well below the height of the ridge of the main roof. In addition it would have three west facing dormer windows.
7. However, the front boundary wall is some 2 metres in height, spanning the full width of the front garden and with solid gates. There is a similar boundary treatment to the adjoining property to the west, No 160 Littlehampton Road, and several mature trees along the front common boundary between the two. To the east the proposed development would be in line with the detached garage of No 1a Ancren Close, but still set back behind the main bungalow of that site, which sits well forward in the street scene.
8. At my site visit I took the opportunity to walk either side of the site for some distance in both directions. Because of the above factors, I consider that the proposed development would be hardly visible at all when travelling in a westerly direction. Travelling eastwards, there might be glimpsed views of the roof appearing above the front boundary but because of the distance it would be set back from the road and the intervening trees, it would not be prominent.
9. The proposed extension would be well designed, with matching materials and with dormers which would respond to existing dormers and gables features on the existing building. Despite its size, it would still be subservient to the main house given the substantial size and bulk of the existing building, particularly its substantial roof form.
10. For a combination of the above reasons and despite the fact that it would be well forward of the front elevation, I do not consider there would be any visual harm arising or that it would be either prominent or obtrusive in the street scene as the Council suggests.

Other Matters

11. Although the proposed development would be fairly close to the rear gardens of Nos 1 and 1a Ancren Close, it would be largely screened by the garage at No 1a. Whilst there may be some change to the outlook from those properties, I do not consider it would result in any significant harm and I note that the Council does not raise any objections in that respect.

¹ Application ref No FG/183/16/HH

Conclusions

12. For the above reasons, the proposed development would not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore comply with Policies GEN7 and DEV19 of the Council's Local Plan 2003 in that it would respond positively to the characteristics of the site, would sympathetically relate to and be visually integrated with the existing building, and would remain subservient to it.
13. Conditions requiring the development to be built in accordance with the approved plans and for matching materials, are necessary in the interests of certainty and visual amenity.
14. Accordingly, subject to those conditions, the appeal is allowed and planning permission granted.

Kim Bennett

INSPECTOR