
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 October 2017

by R C Shrimplin MA(Cantab) DipArch RIBA FRTPI FCI Arb MCIL

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

Decision date: 24 November 2017

Appeal Reference: APP/Q1445/D/17/3181780

34 Greenfield Crescent, Brighton BN1 8HJ

- 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 C Carter against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application (reference BH2017/01763, dated 23 May 2017) was refused by notice dated 19 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is described in the application form as a "loft extension with rear dormer".
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a "loft extension with rear dormer", at 34 Greenfield Crescent, Brighton BN1 8HJ, in accordance with the terms of the application (reference BH2017/01763, dated 23 May 2017), subject to the following conditions.
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings (subject to condition 3, below):
 - drawing number 1003-[11]000B (existing + proposed site location + block plans);
 - drawing number 1003-[20]000A (existing ground floor plan);
 - drawing number 1003-[20]002A (existing roof plan);
 - drawing number 1003-[21]000F (proposed ground floor plan);
 - drawing number 1003-[21]001A (proposed first floor plan);
 - drawing number 1003-[21]002F (proposed roof floor plan);
 - drawing number 1003-[31]000F (existing + proposed rear elevation);
 - drawing number 1003-[31]001E (existing + proposed side elevation);
 - drawing number 1003-[31]002D (existing + proposed rear elevation);
 - drawing number 1003-[41]000F (proposed section A-A).
 - 3) No development shall take place until samples (or specifications) of the materials and drawings (at appropriate scales) of the construction details to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the new development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried

out in accordance with the approved details, using the approved materials.

Main issue

2. The main issue to be determined in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character of the host building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. Greenfield Crescent is a pleasant residential road in the northern part of the city, where there are views to open countryside beyond. The location is suburban in character, with good public transport connections by bus and by train (from Preston Park station, further away). Dwellings in Greenfield Crescent are mixed in character, though generally in traditional styles. In the vicinity of the appeal site, many are semi-detached bungalows, though the natural slope of the land often gives them a more substantial appearance in the streetscene.
4. A number of these bungalows have been extended by the addition of substantial dormers to the rear of the original roofs, together with the conversion of hipped roofs to gabled roofs.
5. Number 34 Greenfield Crescent is a semi-detached bungalow (with number 36) that stands high above the road and is approached by a flight of steps within the front garden. The dwelling was originally a modest bungalow in a conventional form, to which has been added a relatively modern rear extension, wrapping around at the side of the original. This rear extension has a partially flat, partially hipped roof, connected to the main roof of the paired bungalows.
6. The proposal which is the subject of this appeal would involve the extension of the existing hipped roof to form a gable end, together with a large rear dormer, above the existing rear extension.
7. Among other things, the 'National Planning Policy Framework' emphasises the aim of "requiring good design" in the broadest sense (notably at Section 7) and it points out the importance of creating an attractive streetscape and maintaining the overall quality of the area. It is aimed at achieving good design standards generally, which includes protecting existing residential amenities and providing good standards of accommodation.
8. An emphasis on the importance of good design is also to be found in the Development Plan. Notably, Policy QD14 of the 'Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005' provides that extensions to dwellings (including roof alterations) are to be well designed.
9. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document "design guide for extensions and alterations" is also relevant, though it does not have the same force as Policies in the Development Plan. In relation to this project it is noted that the conversion of a hipped roof to a gabled roof is discouraged where that would create an asymmetrical roof to a semi-detached pair of properties.
10. The proposed roof alteration and dormer extension would be similar in scale and form to a number of other such schemes that have been constructed in the

vicinity of the appeal site. Although such dormers are visible from the rear garden of the appeal site, for example, they have only a very limited impact on the streetscene and the visual qualities of the public realm.

11. Such rectangular dormers are not particularly attractive, in architectural terms, but, as the appellant's submissions point out, they can fall within "permitted development rights" that, in effect, set a standard for certain types of minor development. A lawful development certificate has been refused for the scheme that is now the subject of this planning appeal, as recorded in the officer's report on the planning application, and this appeal does not re-open that decision, of course. Nevertheless, the existence of such permitted development rights is, in general terms, a material planning consideration in this appeal.
12. The appeal proposals would not harm neighbours' living conditions, though they would have some impact on the streetscene. The gabled roof at number 34 would not accord with the hipped roof of its pair at number 36, although there are other examples of this nearby and they do not cause undue harm to their surroundings, in the context. The proposed rear dormer would be visible, to a limited extent, from some points along the Crescent and the large area of cladding on the side wall of the dormer would be somewhat intrusive, visually. Again, however, the dormer would not be out of character with its setting. Moreover, other examples along the road exhibit a detail of construction that articulates the main roof pitch in a way that is visually more satisfactory, creating a more textured effect. Such matters of detail can be controlled by condition, of course.
13. Evidently, the appeal site lies within an established urban area, which is "sustainable" in planning terms, and the proposed development would make a useful addition to the existing house. The proposed alterations to the roof would not cause unacceptable harm to the visual quality of the existing streetscene. Hence, I have concluded that the benefits of the project would outweigh the visual awkwardness of the proposed dormer and its very limited impact on the streetscene. Although I have considered all the matters that have been raised in the representations, I have found nothing to cause me to alter my decision.
14. I have concluded that conditions are necessary, to define the planning permission and to ensure that quality is maintained. In imposing conditions, I have taken account of the conditions suggested by the local planning authority in the usual way (without prejudice to their main arguments in the appeal).

Roger C Shrimplin

INSPECTOR