

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 July 2019

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Z1775/D/19/3229769
146 St Andrews Road, Southsea PO5 1EX

- 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 David Ansell against the decision of Portsmouth City Council.
 - The application, Ref. 19/00463/HOU, dated 18 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is a single storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are (i) the effect of the proposed extension on the host building and its surroundings, and (ii) the effect on the living conditions for adjoining occupiers as regards outlook and light.

Reasons

3. On the first issue the Council's objection is on the grounds that the proposed extension would be overly dominant and relate unsympathetically with the character of the host property, including the relationship between a proposed 'protruding rooflight' and the existing first floor rear and side windows.
 4. However, in my view the extension is a modest development that infills a nondescript area between the rearward projecting wing of the building and the boundary with No. 144. Its height would be modest in relation to the existing tall building and its overall size modest. The extension would not project beyond the existing rear wall and its external materials would match those of the building.
 5. The officer's report refers to a 'bulky flat roof', but I do not recognise this as an accurate description. If it refers to the roof lantern, I do not see a problem with this feature in this recessed position. In any event, there is a boundary wall to Montgomerie Road which would prevent views of the addition from the public realm other than the upper part of its rear wall. I do not envisage that those limited views would be perceived as being harmful by any reasonable onlooker.
 6. Accordingly, on the first issue I am unable to support any of the Council's assessment that there would be harm to the building and its surroundings in conflict with Policy PCS23 of the Portsmouth Plan 2012 or Section 12: 'Achieving
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Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 ('the Framework').

7. On the second issue, No. 144 is a student let and has a ground floor communal room with a single aspect, north eastwards, towards the boundary wall / fence with No. 146 and the flank wall of the building itself. Although this aspect is through a bay window which potentially increases the light and outlook, it is very close to the existing boundary wall / fence and would be equally close to the wall of the proposed extension.
8. As part of my visit I was able to go inside No. 144 and see that because of the window's northerly aspect and the proximity to the boundary wall / fence and the main flank wall of the rearward part of No. 146, the outlook is already very poor and the amount of daylight severely restricted. The increased height of the proposed building above the existing boundary wall / fence would reduce the outlook and daylight still further and to a noticeable extent.
9. Even allowing for the student lifestyle where outlook and daylight are possibly less important for the occupiers than other demographics, the effect of the appeal scheme on the already poor living conditions in these respects would be such as to result in the only communal room in No. 144 having almost no level of amenity.
10. Because of this effect, which would be materially worse than in the case of any fall-back situation in the form of permitted development, the appeal proposal would be in unacceptably harmful conflict with the Portsmouth Plan Policy PCS23 and paragraph 127f of the Framework which seeks to ensure that development results in a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
11. I have had regard to all other matters raised by the appellant but although I have rejected the Council's case on the first issue, the determining factor in this appeal is on the second issue. In this regard I conclude that the proposed extension would result in unacceptable living conditions as regards outlook and light for the existing and future occupiers of No. 144.
12. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR