



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 September 2019

by C Osgathorp BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/19/3233102

5 Plainfields Avenue, Brighton BN1 8RJ

- 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 Lloyd Rickson against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2019/01423, dated 14 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is double hip-to-gable roof alterations incorporating 3no south dormers, 1no full length north dormer, alterations to existing ground floor lean-to extension, alterations to east entranceway, revised fenestration and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for double hip-to-gable roof alterations incorporating 3no south dormers, 1no full length north dormer, alterations to existing ground floor lean-to extension, alterations to east entranceway, revised fenestration and associated works at 5 Plainfields Avenue, Brighton BN1 8RJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref BH2019/01423, dated 14 May 2019, 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 materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be finished in accordance with the details shown on drawing No PL1904-06. For the avoidance of doubt, all the external walls of the front and rear dormers hereby permitted shall be finished in tiles to match the tiles on the main roof. The new aluminium windows shall have white frames to match the colour of the existing ground floor window frames.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL1904-01; PL1904-02; PL1904-04; PL1904-05; and PL1904-06.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of development shown on the Council's decision notice and the appellant's appeal form in the banner heading and the decision because it is more precise than the description shown on the planning application form.

3. At my site visit I observed that building works have been carried out to the eastern entranceway and the rear ground floor lean-to extension. At the time of my visit, the external walls of these elements were finished in breeze blocks. I cannot be certain that what I have seen on site is exactly the same as that shown on the plans before me. Neither party has confirmed this to be the case. As I cannot be certain that the development has been constructed in accordance with the plans, I have considered the proposal as presented upon the plans that are the subject of the appeal and not in regard to what I observed at my site visit.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the dwelling and the street scene.

Reasons

5. No 5 Plainfields Avenue is located in an established residential area, which, in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, predominantly consists of semi-detached bungalows. A significant proportion of the bungalows in the area have had roof alterations, including front dormers, rear dormers, rooflights and hip-to-gable roof extensions. The appeal property is a detached bungalow, which is located on a corner plot adjacent to the junction of Plainfields Avenue and Bengairn Avenue.
6. There are many examples of hip-to-gable roof extensions in the area, including Nos 2, 8, 9 and 12 Plainfields Avenue, which have unbalanced the symmetry of the semi-detached buildings to the detriment of the character and appearance of the street scene. In this case, the proposed development includes hip-to-gable roof extensions to each side of the detached dwelling, which would provide a balanced street frontage. The Council is concerned that the roof extension to the eastern side of the dwelling would appear prominent in the street scene due to the corner plot position of the dwelling. However, I find that the roof extension would not appear unduly prominent in the street scene due to the sizeable set-back that would be maintained to Bengairn Avenue.
7. The neighbouring properties at Nos 3, 4, 9 and 10 Plainfields Avenue have first floor front dormers, therefore the provision of front dormers at the appeal property would not appear out of keeping in the street scene. The proposed dormers would be well-spaced and would align appropriately with the ground floor windows. The proposed dormers would be set down from the ridgeline of the main roof and would not appear bulky or dominant on the front elevation of the dwelling.
8. Whilst the proposed rear dormer would be wide and include a large proportion of cladding relative to the size of the windows, it would be set in from the sides of the roof and would be set down from the ridgeline, which would limit its dominance. I observed examples of large box-type rear dormers in the area, including No 2 Plainfields Avenue. In this context, I find that the proposed rear dormer would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or the street scene.
9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposed development would not cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the dwelling or the street scene. The proposal would therefore comply with saved Policy QD14

of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005, which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that alterations to existing buildings are well designed, sited and detailed.

Conditions

10. I have imposed the standard timeframe for implementation condition because I cannot be certain that the development that has taken place accords with the plans before me. I have imposed a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. This is for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of certainty.
11. In order to maintain the character and appearance of the dwelling and the surrounding area, I have also imposed a condition requiring the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development to be finished in accordance with the details shown on drawing No PL1904-06. For the avoidance of doubt, I have stipulated that the external walls of the front and rear dormers shall be finished in tiles to match the tiles on the main roof. Furthermore, the application provides no details of the colour of the frames of the new aluminium windows. Therefore, in the absence of details I have stipulated that the frames shall be white to match the colour of the existing ground floor window frames.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and having had regard to all other matters, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

C Osgathorp

INSPECTOR