The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 March 2020

by Robin Buchanan BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 April 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M3645/D/20/3245297
38 Beatrice Road, Oxted RH8 0PZ

- 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 Graeme Duffy against the decision of Tandridge District Council.
- The application Ref TA/2019/1991, dated 11 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 6 January 2020.
- The development proposed is a rear dormer extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area, having particular regard to design.

Reasons

3. 38 Beatrice Road is a detached chalet bungalow located within a predominantly residential area. It occupies a corner plot, facing Beatrice Road and is side on to Ellice Road. The existing main roof has a very low eaves level but is tall and steeply pitched. The plane of the large front and rear roof slopes is punctuated by a dormer of similar design and positioning either side to facilitate living accommodation at first floor (roof) level. The dormers are set low down in the roof slope. They are relatively slender in vertical height with flat horizontal roofs, though are relatively long so that the side walls are inset a short distance from the edges of the roof, near the large areas of vertical gable end brickwork which narrows to a peak at the ridge.

4. The proposed insertion of a second dormer into the rear roof slope, above the existing dormer, would significantly increase built form at a point approaching the highest, narrowest and most visually exposed part of the existing roof. Albeit of similar design and materials to the existing dormer, the development would nonetheless add substantially to the bulk and mass of the rear elevation and to the building overall.

5. In contrast to the relatively innocuous existing dormers, the staggered or 'double stacked' arrangement of dormers would obscure a large area (nearly all) of remaining rear sloping roof. This would be a fundamental departure from the existing symmetry and equilibrium in the design and appearance of the bungalow where currently roof slope prevails, especially above the existing

dormers. These are distinguishing features of the bungalow as it currently contributes to local distinctiveness.

6. Accordingly, the proposed development would be intrusive and incongruous in public views from the side and rear, in and around Ellice Road and Amy Road (including through gaps and spaces between or over buildings). In particular, the more perpendicular side views from Ellice Road would reveal the aggregate position and projection of dormers beyond the roof slopes and in some upward views the effects of perspective would portray some parts of the proposed dormer as appearing to exceed the ridge line and height of the main roof.

7. As a consequence, the development would cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would not therefore accord with Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy, October 2008 (the CS) or with Policy DP7 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies, July 2014 (the LP). These policies seek to ensure that development is of a high standard of design that must reflect, respect and integrate with the character, setting and local context including features that contribute to or reinforce local distinctiveness.

8. The development would also be contrary to paragraphs 124, 127(a)(b) and (c) and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019. These policies aspire to good design that is visually attractive, sympathetic to local character (including the surrounding built environment) and adds to the overall quality of an area. It would also be at odds with the guidance in the associated Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2019.

Other Matters

9. I note that there were no objections to the development from any neighbours and that the proposed dormer includes only enough internal volume and space for required head room. However, these matters can only be given very limited weight and do not mitigate the harm that I have found.

10. I saw the variety in detailed design and appearance of nearby residential properties. These are, however, conventional two story houses and largely without significant or substantial (or any) built interventions to main roofs – so within a legible composition of local residential building form and 'uniform' in that sense. No 38 and the development in this appeal is distinguishable from this surrounding context.

11. I do not have full details of the nearby multi-storey car park and children's nursery. However, the apparent scale and nature of that development is significantly different to this appeal and, in any event, I have determined the appeal on its planning merits.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

Robin Buchanan

INSPECTOR