
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 August 2020

by S M Holden BSc(Hons) MSc CEng MICE CTPP FCIHT MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4 September 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/20/3248844
27, Freshfield Street, Brighton BN2 9ZG

- 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 Mrs Zoe Suggars against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2019/02740, dated 12 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as: 'raising of ridge on roof of permitted development roof conversion'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for roof alterations including raising of ridge height and installation of a rear dormer at 27, Freshfield Street, Brighton BN2 9ZG in accordance with the application Ref: BH2019/02740, dated 12 September 2019, and the plans numbered CH 926/008 Rev A and CH926 010 Rev A.

Procedural Matters

2. Notwithstanding the description on the application former set out in the header above, the Council's decision notice and the appeal form describe the proposal as 'roof alterations including raising of ridge height and installation of a rear dormer'. I have adopted this description in my decision as it is more accurate. The development has already taken place and there is nothing to suggest that it has not been implemented in accordance with the submitted plans. I have determined the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the roof extension and dormer window on the character and appearance of the host property and the terrace to which it belongs.

Reasons

4. No 27 is part of a terrace of modest 2-storey properties which run the full length of Freshfield Street. The gradient of the road means that the ridge of the terrace is staggered with pairs of properties sharing the same ridge height. Each house is separated from its neighbour by a parapet wall. At the rear the pairs have matching outriggers.

5. The alteration at No 27 has slightly increased the height of the ridge and replaced the ridge tiles with lead flashing. The appearance of the property is therefore at variance with others in the street. However, the changes are of a minor nature; the ridge is still below the parapet wall that marks the shared boundary with No 29. The difference in ridge heights between Nos 27 and its other neighbour, No 25, is masked by the presence of the intervening chimney. Consequently, the increased ridge height has not resulted in the roof being unacceptably prominent within the wider street scene. The replacement of the ridge tiles with lead flashing has introduced a different material into the street scene. However, this does not stand out as the ridge height changes along the street and is broken up by the parapet walls along its length.
6. At the rear there was a pre-existing box-shaped dormer extension over the outrigger. This had already fundamentally altered the appearance of the house. A Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) was then granted, BH2019/00202, for an L-shaped extension of this dormer which would occupy the remainder of the rear roof slope. This was permitted development as none of those works would have exceeded the height of the highest part of the existing roof. The new element would have been of more modest proportions than the pre-existing dormer on the outrigger. It would also be less prominent being set into the remainder of the main roof slope.
7. The only differences between the scheme approved as permitted development and what has been built are small increases in the height of the dormer extension and the main ridge of the house. This increased height has had a minimal effect on the appearance of the rear of the house. The shallow depth of the garden restricts views of the ridge from the rear of the house. The presence of the outriggers on the adjoining properties means that inter-visibility between the gardens and the rear elevations is also restricted. The shared character of the terrace with its pairs of pitched roof outriggers had already been lost with the earlier addition of the dormer above the rear projection. Whereas that dormer is highly visible from the adjacent gardens, the additional dormer window and altered ridge height are barely noticeable.
8. Similar alterations appear to have been undertaken at No 23 and a part retrospective application has been refused by the Council. However, I have assessed the scheme before me having regard to the planning history and evidence provided that specifically relates to No 27.
9. The roof extension and dormer window have not caused unacceptable harm to the host property or the terrace to which it belongs. It therefore complies with Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and Policy CP12 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part 1 which require, amongst other things, roof alterations to respect the host property and the surrounding area.
10. As the development has already been carried out, the only condition necessary is one specifying the plans in the interests of certainty.
11. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is allowed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR