



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 November 2020

by Guy Davies BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/20/3253895

4 College Place, Brighton BN2 1HN

- 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 Gavin Willis against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application BH2020/00488, dated 14 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as replacement of mansard roof with dual pitched roof, rendered walls and one front window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for replacement of gambrel roof with dual pitched roof, rendered walls and one front window at 4 College Place, Brighton BN2 1HN in accordance with the terms of the application BH2020/00488, dated 14 February 2020, 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 development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 19104-P-011A, 19104-P-012A and 19104-P-013A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 4) The window shall not be installed until full details of profile, finish and glass, including glazing methods, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the installation shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and methods.

Procedural Matters

2. At the time of the Council's decision on the appeal proposal, an application to retain a full length dormer window with Juliette balcony in the roof and the replacement of windows in the front elevation had been refused and an appeal was pending¹. That appeal has now been allowed. I have considered the building on that basis.
3. The existing form of the roof is more accurately described as a gambrel rather than a mansard, and I have used this description in my decision above.

¹ APP/Q1445/D/20/3247155

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the East Cliff Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The East Cliff Conservation Area covers an area of Brighton resulting from the early growth of the city eastwards from its original centre. The significance of the part of the Conservation Area around College Place is the largely intact historic street layout and homogeneous appearance of its terraced houses, which front directly onto the narrow roads to give a dense, urban character. The two and three storey terraced houses are generally stuccoed with two storey height bay windows and shallow pitched roofs concealed behind parapets.
6. The appeal site forms part of a small mews court occupying land at the rear of the terraces fronting the surrounding roads. Because of its backland position, views of the appeal building are limited to glimpsed views from College Place, and longer views from Bloomsbury Street opposite. Within the mews court, adjacent buildings have shallow pitched, slate, hipped or gabled roofs. Views of the rear roofs of buildings visible from but outside the mews court are also of shallow hipped roofs, some in tile and some in slate.
7. Within this context, the proposed development of a simple, shallow pitched slate roof would complement the prevailing roof forms in the mews court, and in my view would be more sympathetic to the character and appearance of those in the wider Conservation Area than the existing gambrel construction. Although there is some variation in roof forms in the Conservation Area, its character and appearance are defined more by the similarity and regularity of built forms and materials rather than a divergence or contrast between them.
8. The proposed roof would not increase the height of the building, and while it would have a higher eaves line this would not appear out of place in the Conservation Area where three storey buildings are common. A new window would be installed in the front elevation, which would match those below in alignment and design. The rendered finish would match that of the existing building and the typical finish to the majority of surrounding buildings.
9. 4 College Place is not listed or of individual historic importance and therefore the replacement of its roof structure would not result in the loss of fabric of overriding historic importance. The appellant suggests that the gambrel roof is in any case modern in age although no evidence has been presented to corroborate that view.
10. I conclude that the proposed development would result in a positive change that would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and as a result would accord with policies QD14 and HE6 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and policy CP15 of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One, which require, amongst other criteria, a high standard of design and detailing reflecting the scale and character or appearance of the area, including building forms.
11. For the same reasons, I conclude it would also accord with the supplementary planning guidance in SPD09 'Architectural Features'. Although a reference in this document advises that *'where a roof is visible from the street, its form and*

*shape must not be altered*², in the circumstances I have set out above, I consider alteration to be justified.

12. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. For the reasons given above I am satisfied that the proposed development would achieve that aim.

Conditions

13. The Council has not suggested any conditions, but I consider it necessary to impose the standard time limit condition as well as a condition listing the approved drawings in the interests of certainty. I consider a condition requiring materials to match those of the existing building is also necessary in the interests of the appearance of the building and the character of the Conservation Area.
14. I shall impose a condition requiring details of the window to be submitted to and approved by the Council in the interests of the character and appearance of the building and wider area. I noted on my site visit that the windows installed in the front elevation are two pane sash windows, rather than the small pane sash windows shown on the drawings. The condition will enable the Local Planning Authority to consider the design of the window in more detail in this regard.

Conclusion

15. I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Guy Davies

INSPECTOR

² Section B – Roofs, page 7.