
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 November 2021

by S Leonard BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C3810/D/21/3276723

6 The Green, Pagham PO21 4RZ

- 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 J Wentzell against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref P/21/21/HH, dated 10 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 15 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion to form new first floor with front and rear dormer projections.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the refusal of the planning application and the submission of this appeal, a revised version of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) was published on 20 July 2021. I have taken this into account where relevant to my decision.
3. The Council's delegated report confirms that the Council's view is that the proposed rear dormer extension could potentially comprise permitted development and, as such, constitute a fall-back position which is relevant to the consideration of the appeal proposal.
4. I have no evidence before me that a formal application for a certificate of lawfulness with respect to this element of the appeal scheme has been determined by the Council, and the determination of what could potentially be built under permitted development rights is not a matter for me to decide within the context of an appeal made under Section 78 of the Act. Accordingly, I am required to determine the appeal on the basis of the scheme before me, which includes consideration of the rear dormer.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the wider surrounding area.

Reasons

6. The appeal property comprises a semi-detached, pitched roof bungalow, located on the west side of The Green, within an established open plan suburban residential area. It forms one of an identical pair of modest bungalows, with a similar pair of properties being located adjacent to the north

of the site. These semi-detached pairs of properties have a symmetrical and simple, traditional design, with brick walls under tiled steeply pitched roofs. The roofs have an uncluttered, unaltered appearance, featuring centrally located chimneys, which adds to the sense of symmetry across the pairs of properties. The detached bungalows to each side of these semi-detached pairs present a similar pitched roof form and building orientation in relation to the street.

7. This layout and style of dwellings is mirrored on the opposite side of the road with similarly designed and positioned properties. Dormers do not feature in this part of the road. As such, there is a strong, regular rhythm of building design along this short, straight stretch of The Green. Due to the open plan nature of these properties, this is readily apparent within views from the public realm, both when looking towards each side of the road individually, and also in views incorporating both sides of the road, when approaching from either end of the street. This consistency of modestly designed, single storey dwellings, with unaltered pitched roofs of a similar ridge height and roof orientation towards the road, makes a positive contribution to the street scene and the character and appearance of the area.
8. The proposal would be out of keeping with the group of properties within which the appeal property lies, disrupting the regularity of building design. Each flat-roofed box dormer would occupy a considerable amount of the respective roof slope of the dwelling within which it is sited, extending close to the roof ridge and eaves and almost across the entire width of the roof slopes. As such, they would dominate the roof, due to their combined scale, mass, width and height. The large amount of blank wall around the windows of the front dormer would add to its visually apparent bulk. Moreover, the flat-roofed design of each dormer would not respect the traditional pitched roof construction of the original property.
9. As such, the dormers would appear as bulky, top-heavy and discordant additions to the front and rear roof slopes, which would be out of character with the prevalent roofscape within the site locality. This would be evident in views of the property from the street, with the cumulative impact of both dormers being particularly apparent in views of the northeast elevation, when approaching the site from Abbotsbury Road. This would detract from the appearance of the property when viewed within the context of the streetscape, harmfully eroding the established pattern of built development along both sides of the road to the detriment of the visual amenities of the street scene. The rear dormer would also be visible from neighbouring properties and their gardens. The proposals would draw the eye, and appear at odds with the prevailing consistent roofscape which is characteristic of the street.
10. The incongruous nature of the proposal would be exacerbated by its discordant appearance in relation to the adjacent semi-detached property. It would notably unbalance the existing visual harmony arising from the symmetry of the two dwellings. This would have a materially harmful impact on the appearance of the building as a whole, and would be out of keeping with the pairs of semi-detached properties which comprise a positive element of the street scene.
11. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of existing flat roofed dormers in nearby streets. Whilst I acknowledge that these are features of the wider residential area, I have not been provided with details of their planning

history, and it is not for me to comment on the appropriateness of these or otherwise.

12. Moreover, none of the cited dormers are located within the stretch of The Green where the appeal site is located. On my site visit, I observed that these developments are not exactly comparable with the appeal scheme, having regard to factors including the dormer details, the host property design, and/or the location in relation to prevailing street scene character.
13. Moreover, I must determine the appeal proposal on its individual planning merits, and within the context of the character and appearance of the existing building and the immediate locality within which it is sited. The existence of other flat-roofed dormers within the wider residential development does not justify the harm that I have found.
14. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the wider surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to Policies D DM1 and D DM4 of the *Adoption Arun Local Plan 2011 – 2031* (2018) and the *Arun District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* (2021). These policies and guidance, amongst other aims, require new development to demonstrate a high standard of architectural principles, residential extensions to sympathetically relate to the existing building in siting, massing, design, form and scale, and new dormers to comprise a minor incident in the roof plane, not to be overly dominant, not to be located close to verges, and not to damage the original character and appearance of the building and its surrounding area.
15. For similar reasons, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies of the Framework which seek to secure well-designed places as set out in Chapter 12.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Leonard

INSPECTOR