

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/T1410/D/21/3289072

50 Harding Avenue, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 8PL

- 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 Scott Beecham against the decision of Eastbourne Borough Council.
 - The application Ref PC/210695, dated 4 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 October 2021.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a two storey rear extension and an additional floor to the existing house at second floor level.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more concise than the application form; I note the Appellant also uses this on the appeal form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the:
 - character and appearance of the locality; and
 - living conditions for neighbours.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling with a flat roof, art deco style, having parapet walls and interesting elevations similar in design to the adjoining neighbour and a number of further properties in the surrounding area. Other dwellings within this area of pleasing established residential character have pitched roofs. The properties all come together to form an attractive streetscene and the art deco homes play a key role in this aesthetic. The proposal is as described above; a terrace would be formed over part of the two storey rear extension.
 5. As I note above, the streetscene in this locality is an attractive one. A contributory reason for this is that none of the dwellings unduly stand out or catch the attention, they work well together visually, and this is because of
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their design, massing and heights. Regrettably the addition of an additional storey on the appeal property would appreciably disrupt the picture. The proposal would look overly large and out of place. This would be further exacerbated because the balance of the semi-detached pair would be markedly lost; the two homes would sit awkwardly together.

6. The additional bulk embodied within the appeal scheme would be unduly prominent within Harding Avenue and jarring on the eye.
7. The Council's Core Strategy Local Plan (LP) Policies B2 and D10 and Saved Policies UHT1 and UHT4 of the Borough Plan (BP) are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters they seek to secure development which would display good quality design, be appropriate in scale and layout, protect local amenity and reflect local distinctiveness. Given the foregoing I conclude that the development proposed would be contrary to these development plan policies.

Living conditions for neighbours

8. The planned two storey dwelling would be a sizeable mass of building situated, effectively, on the boundary with the neighbouring home (No 48) and in relatively close proximity to No 52 to the northwest side. There would be some overshadowing although I agree with the Appellant that orientation would limit this impact.
9. Of more serious concern is the sense of dominance which would arise from this unduly overbearing structure. Outlook would be appreciably reduced from within neighbours' homes and their 'patio' areas; the effect of being unduly hemmed-in would be palpable.
10. Added to this situation would be an increased loss of privacy and opportunity for overlooking via the elevated terrace area. There will always be intervisibility in a street such as this but the potential for viewing from this terrace, and the sense of privacy being invaded, would be appreciably beyond that found or felt by means of normal first floor windows in this suburban setting.
11. LP Policy B2 and BP Saved Policy HO20 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters they seek to ensure that development would protect residential amenity in its various guises for neighbours. Given the foregoing I would conclude that the appeal scheme would conflict with these policies.

Other matters

12. I do understand the wish to extend the property to assist with accommodation for the household and I can see that thought has been given to the architecture and matters such as external materials. I considered the nearby sites drawn to my attention within this varied locality. I do not know the full planning background of these, but did not find them directly comparable in design, siting, built relationships, or scale. In any event I must determine the appeal proposal on its own merits.
13. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issues identified above.

14. I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered; the Council's policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within the Framework.

Overall conclusion

15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable adverse effects on the character and appearance of the locality and on living conditions for neighbours. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR