The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29TH July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/22/3297185
129 Southdown Road, Portslade, BN41 2HJ

- 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 & Mrs Hardwick against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
- The application Ref BH2021/04442, dated 17 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2022.
- The development proposed is the erection of single storey first floor rear extension.

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 Appellants also use this on the appeal form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and locality.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached bungalow with front and rear dormers and a hip to gable alteration. Bungalows or chalet bungalows generally prevail in the immediate vicinity. The locality is of established residential character and buildings and gardens come together to create a neighbourhood of pleasing appearance with an understated sense of suburbia. The appeal scheme is as described above; I note both principal appeal parties use the word 'dormer' and certainly one could fairly call this a large flat roofed dormer-like construction.

5. Whilst being dormer-like in nature the sheer scale of this box-shaped addition would lead to a very ungainly property with a flat roof and vertical sides almost swamping the original form of bungalow. Fully accepting that there has been change already to this property, to my eye this would be a step much too far. The top-heavy final structure would lack aesthetic quality in its own right and stand out in the vicinity as an alien and uncomfortable visual form amongst other generally subtle buildings where pitched roofs predominate and most

alterations have been relatively modest and subservient in comparison to, and contrast with, the Appellants' scheme. In my assessment the appeal proposal would represent poor quality design.

6. Policies QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan, CP12 of the City Plan Part One and DM21 of the City Plan Part 2 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters, these policies seek well designed and suitably scaled development that should protect the character and visual quality of buildings and the local distinctiveness of their wider area and generally have architectural merit. In all the circumstances I conclude that the appeal scheme would conflict with these planning policies.

Other matters

7. I do understand the Appellants' wish to increase accommodation within the property and I sympathise with the family need for more space. I can see that thought has been given to matching materials and I do note that there are no residential amenity issues raised or objections from neighbours. I appreciate there are other roof alterations in the locality albeit not necessarily identical to the appeal scheme in form, scale or location and in any event I must assess this case on its own merits. On the question of the scheme, I appreciate that the Appellants have indicated a willingness to be flexible over its design but I have to consider the plans which are before me.

8. I have carefully considered all the points raised by the Appellants but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issue identified above.

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

Overall conclusion

10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal proposal would have unacceptable effects on the character and appearance of the host property and the locality. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR