

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/M3835/D/22/3298323

2 Chesswood Road, Worthing, BN11 2AD

- 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 Julia Petretta against the decision of Worthing Borough Council.
 - The application Ref AWDM/0174/22, dated 3 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of first floor west side extension to form home office and bedroom with en-suite. rear south elevation to have balcony and privacy screen.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality and on living conditions for neighbours.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a two storey semi-detached house with white rendered and brick elevations, a front gable detail and hipped roof. A single storey extension lies to the side of the house forming a garage and kitchen extension. There are dwellings to the sides and rear and a Junior School located opposite the site. The dwellings on this side of the road are generally houses of similar design and form although more widely there is variation in type. The locality is one of established good quality character with a pleasing appearance stemming from well-designed buildings, and a range of gardens and open spaces.
 4. The appeal proposal is as described above and would be built above the single storey side extension. It would add considerably to the existing structure and even with its roof set-down this glazed-gable fronted scheme with no set-back would result in a bold change to the form of the existing property. On occasion a striking addition can be an appropriate design solution. However, to my eye in this instance with this house and streetscene the new works would be overly dominant, lack subservience, appear cramped, fail to incorporate a necessary subtle approach, incorporate strangely positioned fenestration, and unduly
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impinge upon the pleasing symmetry of the semi-detached pair. In summary the scheme would be unacceptably incongruous at this plot, run contrary to the character of the area, and would be inordinately visually detrimental.

5. Saved Policy H16 of the Worthing Local Plan (LP), Policy 16 of the Worthing Core Strategy (CS), and Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Extending or altering your home' (SPG) are pertinent. Taken together and amongst other matters, they seek to ensure that development is well designed, proportional, would not impact the streetscene or qualities of the host property or its surrounds, and is generally of appropriate scale, massing and appearance. I conclude that there would be conflict with the policies and objectives of the SPG.

Living conditions

6. The development would be proximate to boundaries, of significant scale and depth, and the embody appreciable south facing glazing and a balcony arrangement. The consequence of these facts is two-fold. Firstly, the appeal proposal would be an excessive bulk of building which would simply be uncomfortably and unacceptably over-bearing for adjacent residents to the west (No 56 Homefield Road). Those living within this local environment would rightly expect to enjoy a degree of outlook and some spaciousness and this development with a very substantial and close side wall would unduly impinge upon that. Secondly, the arrangement of the planned development, and the unusual plot shape and diminution at the south west corner, would result in unreasonable and uncomfortable levels of overlooking to the garden to the south (No 54 Homefield Road). There will always be some inter-visibility in a neighbourhood such as this but regrettably the appeal scheme would take that to excess.
7. LP saved policies H16 and H18, CS Policy 16, and the SPG are relevant. Amongst other matters, they seek to ensure that new development would protect standards of residential amenity for neighbours. Given the foregoing I would conclude that the appeal scheme would conflict with the policies and the SPG.

Other matters

8. I do fully understand the Appellant's wish to extend and the points made about home working. I note that a side facing window would be removed and lead to some modest and specific improvement in privacy. I observed a mix of development types in the area. I appreciate that neighbours did not object but I do have to protect residential amenity for the long term. I fully understand the Appellant's flexibility over, for example, the type of balcony and the wish for design dialogue generally, however I have to determine the plans which are before me.
9. I have carefully considered these and all the other points raised by the Appellant but these matters do not outweigh the concerns which I have in relation to the main issues identified above.

10. 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

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

D Cramond

INSPECTOR