



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2022

by D Cramond BSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 October 2022.

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/22/3302599

23 Rodmell Avenue, Saltdean, Brighton BN2 8LT

- 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 Wei Wang against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2022/00265, dated 27 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is the remodelling and extensions to existing dwelling, incorporating new roof with side and rear dormers, two-storey front and rear extensions, first-floor side extension and alterations to fenestration.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I use the Council's description of development which is more precise 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 a) the character and appearance of the host property and the locality and b) living conditions for neighbours.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a well-proportioned two-storey detached home in a suburban location with a range of other detached houses in the locality. Whilst designs differ on the homes there is a sense of some unity with subtle and pleasing roof forms and these properties, their gardens, level changes and long views create a whole scene of established good quality residential character and an area of very attractive appearance. The proposal is as described above.
 5. The varied additions at first floor and above would be sizeable and, in my opinion, stretch unduly and awkwardly in all directions to the detriment and disruption of the existing elevations and roofscape. The additional bulk and height would be appreciable and not in character with the area and the
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property would become 'top-heavy'. The unusual and excessive approach to dormers would be very ungainly and in parts around the building the planned fenestration would pay little regard to the existing arrangements and would fail to take suitable cues from what is in place.

6. In summary, I find the proposed works to be a conglomeration of excessive, incongruous and disjointed alterations which would harm immediate and wider aesthetic qualities. The scheme would not represent good design.
7. Policies QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan (LP), CP12 of the City Plan Part One (CP1) and DM21 of the City Plan Part 2 (CP2) 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.

Living conditions

8. The very presence of this bulk of building and this degree of glazing and balcony arrangements in proximity to neighbours would be unsettling and not meet the expectations of amenity that those living locally would reasonably have. There would be appreciable degrees of dominance and undue enclosure for neighbours along with impingement upon outlook, light and privacy within pertinent garden areas. Even having regard to levels, obscure glazing, side screens, neighbouring extensions and orientation the result of the scale, form and siting of the appeal works would be un-neighbourliness; living conditions would be unduly impacted.
9. LP Saved Policy QD27 and CP2 Policy DM20 are relevant. Taken together and amongst other matters they seek to protect the amenities of neighbours. Given the foregoing I would conclude that the appeal scheme would run contrary to these policies.

Other matters

10. I do understand the Appellant's wish increase the accommodation at this property which appears to be below the local average size and I appreciate the aim to improve the awkward and at times tight internal room arrangements. I do hope that some suitably coherent and sized solution can be found. I can see that thought has been given to the use of materials and also to how this intended multi-generational home might work in practice. I have considered the planning permission (BH2020/02107) cited for No 35 Rodmell Avenue and also many other local examples of alterations and extensions. However, I found none of these to be directly comparable in terms of scale, location or form and in any event, I must assess the case before me on its own merits. I have had due regard to the ground levels which have been drawn to my attention but I find these would not mitigate the aesthetic impact of the appeal scheme. 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.

11.I confirm that policies in the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered and the development plan policies which I cite mirror relevant objectives within that document.

Overall conclusion

12.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 as well as on living conditions for neighbours. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

D Cramond

INSPECTOR