

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2023

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/D/22/3303241

9 Marchants Road, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks BN6 9UP

- 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 Hannah Smith against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application, Ref. DM/22/0919, dated 18 March 2022 was refused by notice dated 13 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is the partial demolition of the existing workshop to the rear of the detached garage. Construction of a two-storey side and rear extension to the rear and side elevations. Construction of a single storey kitchen extension to the rear elevation. Construction of a single storey porch/WC extension to the front and side elevations. Associated hard and soft landscaping works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the Marchants Road street scene.

Reasons

3. I saw on my visit that the appeal dwelling is one half of a semi-detached pair with No. 11. Although the appeal scheme comprises a number of alterations and additions as set out in the header above, the officer's report explains that the Council's particular concern is with the two-storey side and rear extension.
 4. There are other houses of the same original design in the road and Nos. 1 & 3 have had two storey side extensions, as indeed has the neighbouring No. 7 and the adjoining No. 11. The extended form of these houses is in my view a constraint on the design of alterations and additions to the appeal dwelling.
 5. This is because in a tightly knit estate development where the front of each house is seen or 'read' with its neighbour there needs to be a degree of continuity and symmetry to maintain a reasonably harmonious character and appearance. All of the above-mentioned extensions have substantially increased the living space of the original dwellings, but have done so in a way that follows the approach of the Council's Design Guide SPD.
 6. However, in this regard I consider that gabled and pillared design of the front porch would be out of keeping with the host dwelling, all the more so because
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the porch extensions at Nos. 7 and 11 have mono-pitched roofs that slope away from the road and help to integrate the first floor side extensions with the original dwelling.

7. However as the Council says, the more important issue is the retention of the existing garage with the set back of the two storey extension to an extent that essentially lines in with the extended No. 7 and closes the gap between two dwellings. This negates much of the visual benefit of the original staggered siting of Nos. 7 & 9. And with its partial projection at first floor above the rear of the retained garage and wrap around the rear wall of the house, the two-storey extension would also fail to visually integrate with the existing building in a satisfactory way.
8. In the view from the road the appearance of the porch seen together with the flat roofed garage and almost wholly recessed siting of the two-storey addition would draw the eye and, as described in the Notice of Refusal, appear as a somewhat contrived and incongruous addition. I have noted the appellant's criticism of this description, but do not regard it as wholly unreasonable.
9. I have given careful consideration to the other grounds of appeal. However, I am not convinced that any suggested limitation of the view from the road would be sufficient to offset the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene. And although the scale of the two storey addition would be subservient to the host dwelling, it is the juxtaposition of the different design elements and the unorthodox siting of the two-storey extension that in this case would appear harmfully at odds with the immediate context of the building.
10. The occupiers of the adjoining No. 11 agree with the Council's views on design and siting and additionally have concerns as to the effect on their enjoyment of daylight and sunlight and the outlook at the rear of their house. I consider that there is merit in terms of the case as regards outlook but have also noted the Council's view that this effect would not warrant a reason for refusal. In the event, in the light of my decision on the main issue this is not the deciding factor in this appeal.
11. Overall and having had regard to all other matters raised, I consider that the proposal would be in harmful conflict with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 adopted in 2018; Design Principles 9E, DG49 & DG50 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2020, and Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons explained above and having had regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR