



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 March 2023

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z3825/D/23/3314344

Solva, Blackgate Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9HA.

- 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 Paul Ford against the decision of Horsham District Council
 - The application Ref DC/22/1515, dated 9 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is a roof dormer.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a roof dormer at Solva, Blackgate Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9HA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/22/1515, dated 9 August 2023, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.
 - 3) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, drawings: 221/P/001, 002, 003, 004 and 005.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the host property and thereby whether the proposal would serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Henfield Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Solva is one half of a semi-detached pair of houses. It is part of a row of similar late 19th or early 20th century dwellings, located in the Henfield Conservation Area.
4. The appellant proposes a new rear dormer to enlarge the existing habitable accommodation at the second-floor level. The adjoining semi-detached property has a similar large flat roof box dormer to that proposed here.
5. The neighbouring box dormer and that proposed are/would be located so as to maintain the eaves line of the main roof, be set well down from the ridge line and in from the gable ends. Accordingly, I consider, the proposed dormer would

appear as a typical vernacular dormer addition, one that would be well proportioned and balanced on the roof.

6. I am sympathetic to the Council's suggestion that smaller more modest pitched roofed dormers are usually a more desirable solution when creating roof space accommodation in traditional vernacular housing stock in conservation areas. However, the introduction of such dormers here would, in my judgement, detract from the symmetry of the semi-detached pair, and could appear somewhat out of place and incongruous in this context.
7. I also acknowledge the Council's concern that the introduction of another box dormer here would create an unbroken form across the rear of the roof. However, from my observations I do not share this concern as the two-storey rear outshot to the semi-detached pair and the retained chimney stack would serve to break up the appearance and thereby the visual mass of the dormers. Further, there are no direct, face on views of the rear of the pair from the public realm.
8. The proposed dormer would not impact on the main façade of the semi-detached pair or be open to view from the west. There would be some very limited views between neighbouring houses from the north along Blackgate Lane. The main views, albeit limited, would as I saw on site be from Hewits a modern housing development outside of the conservation area.
9. The proposed dormer would not cause harm to the architectural integrity of the host property. Further, whilst I do not think that other than restoring a degree of symmetry the proposed dormer would enhance the appearance of the property, it would not harm it. I have therefore concluded on the main issue that the proposed dormer would in this case serve to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
10. The proposal would therefore not conflict with the objectives of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policies 32, 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (Adopted November 2015) as they relate to the quality of development and the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas

Conditions

11. The conditions follow from those suggested by the Council. To ensure a high quality development, I shall include a condition about the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building.
12. In the interests of certainty, I shall impose a condition requiring the development to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusions

13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR