



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 January 2024

by N Perrins BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/23/3329941

43 Rowan Way, Rottingdean, Brighton BN2 7FP

- 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 Nathan and Helena Roberts against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref: BH2023/01903, dated 3 July 2023, was refused by notice dated 30 August 2023.
 - The proposed development is for roof alterations to create an additional storey including raising the roof ridge height, installation of rear dormer and 8 no rooflights, new window to front gable end, render to elevations and associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have adopted the description of development from the Council's decision notice instead of that used on the planning application form because it more accurately describes the development.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a single storey detached bungalow located on the west side of Rowan Way in Rottingdean. The character of the area is residential with a mix of housing types and styles. The appeal site forms part of a run of single storey bungalows that all have similar designs; the main difference is that the appeal site is the only detached property in the run with the others being semi-detached. Further along the western side of Rowan Way beyond the semi-detached dwellings are detached bungalows. The eastern side of Rowan Way, including directly opposite the appeal site, comprises two and three storey dwellings.
5. The proposed development would add an extension on the roof to provide additional living accommodation for the property. The works would raise the ridge height by an indicated 1.76m. A large rear dormer window is also proposed.

6. The appeal site and the adjacent semi-detached bungalows on the west side of Rowan Way have similar designs, heights and roof forms; together these properties, including the appeal site, provide a strong consistency to the street scene. The materials and detailing proposed are acceptable as they respect the pattern and form of the existing development along the street. However, the proposed 1.76m increase in roof height would create a form of development that is very visibly out of context and proportion with the scale and uniformity of the bungalows along the west side of Rowan Way. The scale of development proposed is then exacerbated by the extensions to the gable ends and rooflights at the front of the property. The dormer window would be set in from the sides of the roof and the fenestration pattern would be acceptable. However, that does not negate its evident bulk which, combined with the other extensions, would result in an excessively dominant building in the street scene when compared to the adjacent bungalows.
7. I have also considered carefully the varied overall character in the area with a range of dwelling styles evident including the two storey properties directly opposite the site. However, the east side properties nearest the appeal site, whilst elevated, are all two or three storey dwellings and therefore not directly comparable to the scale, form and consistency of development on the west side of Rowan Way.
8. Whilst I acknowledge that the protected tree at the front would provide some screening, it is not large enough to mitigate the full visual impact of the increased height, scale and bulk as is proposed. The appeal property is the last dwelling at the end of this run of properties adjacent to where the road turns the corner and school playing fields beyond as well as being on lower ground to the road. However, neither of these site specific characteristics sufficiently overcome the harm identified from the scale of the proposal and impact it would have on the Rowan Way street scene.
9. In conclusion, I find that the appeal proposal would harm the character and appearance of the street scene on the west side of Rowan Way due to its excessive height, scale and bulk. It is therefore contrary to Policy CP12 of the Brighton & Hove City Local Plan Part One, which expects all new development to raise the standard of architecture and design in the city, and Policies DM18 and DM21 of the Brighton and Hove City Plan Part Two, which require extensions to make a positive contribution to a sense of place and the visual quality of the environment, respond positively to the urban grain and be scaled, sited and detailed in relation to adjoining properties and surrounding area. The proposal also is not consistent with the advice in the Council's Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 12 (SPD) 2013 that seeks to ensure roof extensions to respect the scale, continuity, roofline and general appearance of the street scene.

Other Matters

10. I note the appellant considers that extending and improving existing housing has benefits in terms of both energy efficiency and the availability of suitable housing that would accord with the principles of sustainable development. I also have sympathy with the appellant's needs for more space. However, whilst I have given these matters some weight in this decision I am not persuaded that they are sufficient justification to outweigh the harmful effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area. That no objections were

received to the proposal from any party including the Parish Council weighs neutrally in the planning balance.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, the proposal is not consistent with the policies of the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would lead me to a different conclusion. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR