



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2025

by **N Perrins MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3810/W/25/3363299

78 Wick Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex BN17 7JS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Glen Ferrell against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref is LU/10/25/PL.
 - The proposed development is demolition of existing rear extension from shop and construction of a two-storey rear extension to enlarge the floorspace of the existing shop premises, with additional office/storage space on 1st floor, alterations to existing fenestrations, and alteration of existing shopfront layout, allowing for disabled access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the construction of the two storey rear extension. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the alteration of existing shopfront, allowing for disabled access in accordance with the terms of the application, ref: LU/10/25/PL, and the plans submitted with it so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby granted planning permission and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans (i) Location Plan, (ii) Block Plan Ref: TQRQM25018122303384, and (iii) Proposed Elevation and Floor Plans drawing.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of development from the Council's decision notice as that more accurately describes the appeal proposal and includes reference to all parts of the proposal including the shop front alterations.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - (i) the character and appearance of the area; and
 - (ii) the living conditions of the adjacent property No 80A Wick Street.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is a semi-detached two storey building with a front gabled pitched roof located in the urban area of Littlehampton. The building is vacant and undergoing renovations to bring it back up to a standard where it could attract a future occupier. The plot is relatively deep extending from Wick Street at its front to Beaconsfield Road behind. The character of the area is a mix of commercial and residential typical of its town centre location.
5. The appeal proposal seeks permission to erect a two-storey rear extension with a flat roof to increase the commercial floor area at the site following demolition of the existing single storey projection. The building's shopfront is proposed to be altered to create a disabled accessible building from Wick Street as well as moving the door entrance to a central position.
6. Policy D DM4 of the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (ALP) requires amongst other matters for extensions and alterations to buildings to be visually integrated and subservient to the main building. In this case, the proposed extension would add substantial bulk and mass to the rear of the building at first floor level, which currently comprises a small single storey projection.
7. Moreover, the proposed flat roof design when considered with the depth of projection would result in an extension that would appear overly bulky in its form and mass when compared with what it would replace. As such, the rear extension would not appear a well-integrated extension in design and scale terms to the main building with its pitched roof. It would also lack the required subservience to the main building, compared with the single storey it would replace, as well as design subtlety in its roof form.
8. I note in this regard that the appellant contends that a pitched roof design would draw more attention and reduce usability of the rooms although this is not supported by any objective analysis. From the information before me, I find that the rear extension with its flat roof would be seen in its context as an overly large and discordant addition that would not integrate successfully with the main building that would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area contrary to the requirements of Policy D DM4.
9. I acknowledge that the rear extension would not be prominently visible in the wider townscape. However, it would still be visible to the front from the immediately adjacent properties and part of Wick Street where its incongruous design, scale, roof and form would be markedly notable. While the views from Beaconsfield Road are further back, the proposed extension and incongruous bulk and flat roof design would also be visible from the street scape to the rear. The bulk and scale that derives from the flat roof design would be particularly prominent from this direction where the roof scape character above ground floor comprises pitched roof form. The flat roof first floor component would, therefore, unacceptably jar with the established townscape character around the site to the rear.
10. Materials for the rear extension are proposed to comprise composite cladding. While there is some variation in materials in the locality, cladding only the rear section would result in a development that is discordant in its visual appearance

with the design of the front section. That said, materials could be controlled by condition were the scale, bulk and room of the rear extension to be acceptable.

11. Whilst I have identified there to be harm from the bulk, design and flat roof form of the proposed rear extension, the proposed changes to the shopfront are acceptable. The positioning of the door centrally in the building would not appear out of place in the street scene where similar designs are evident along the commercial ground floor frontage. The provision of disabled access from Wick Street is also a positive aspect of the proposal and will allow for a more inclusive use of the property going forward for future commercial occupiers and their customers.
12. In conclusion, I find that the proposed alterations to the shopfront would not cause material harm to the character and appearance of the area and accords with Policies D DM1 and D DM4 of the ALP, which require development to reflect or improve character in terms of various matters including scale, massing and design features. However, I find that the proposed two storey rear extension would conflict with these development plan policies for the reasons set out above.

Living conditions

13. The adjacent property No 80A has rear windows at first floor level that the Council consider are likely to serve a habitable room as part of a residential use of some of the building. The appellant suggests that the first floor of No 80A is not being used for residential and instead used for storage. Although there is no definitive evidence about how the first floor of No 80A is currently being used, I still need to consider the broader effects of the proposal, including the possibility that the neighbouring first floor could be used for habitable accommodation now or in the future.
14. In this regard, the rear extension due to its depth and flank wall with flat roof would have a notably oppressive impact on the outlook from the first-floor window at No 80A where it would look out partly onto a blank façade. Without any evidence to the contrary, the proposal would also be likely to reduce daylight and sunlight to the first-floor window at No 80A due to the bulky flat roof design and rear projection of around 10 metres.
15. I am also not persuaded that the adjacent Wick Hall building has a comparable existing impact as it is set back around 8 metres from No 80A whereas the proposed extension in this case would be directly adjacent to the rear window. I, therefore, give any existing impacts from Wick Hall limited weight in this decision.
16. For the reasons stated, I find that the depth of the rear extension when combined with its flat roof design and large expanse of blank flank wall façade would have an unacceptable impact on the adjacent first floor window. Accordingly, the rear extension does not accord with Policies QE SP1, D DM1 and D DM4 of the ALP, which require development to not have a significantly negative impact upon residential amenity, have minimal impact to users and occupiers of nearby properties and to not have an adverse overshadowing or overbearing effect on neighbouring properties. Whilst I have found harm from the rear extension, there are no adverse impacts on living conditions from the proposed shopfront alterations.

Planning Balance

17. I have no concerns with the proposed shopfront alteration, which would appear as a harmonious part of the commercial ground floor frontage. However, I have found there to be harm from the proposed two storey rear extension on the character and appearance of the area and the amenity of the adjacent first floor window at No 80A. This harm derives from the proposed rear extension's two storey blocky, flat roof design that would project around 10 metres from the main building to the rear.
18. I acknowledge the benefits of the proposal in terms of local employment and vitality of the commercial area from a revitalised and extended building with increased retail floorspace, as well as being in a sustainable location. I also acknowledge that the building needs renovation and the proposal would address this by modernising and upgrading the site. Whilst I attribute significant weight to these in this decision as they are important aspects, it has not been demonstrated that these benefits could not be achieved through a more sympathetic design for the rear extension, particularly in respect of the roof form and overall bulk. As such, the economic and regeneration benefits that could be attributed to the proposal do not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
19. However, as the proposed shopfront is acceptable in planning terms and can be constructed separately from the proposed rear extension, I determine that a split decision is appropriate in this case. As such, I grant planning permission for the proposed shopfront alterations including disabled access subject to conditions, which are discussed in the following section and refuse planning permission for the proposed two storey rear extension.

Conditions

20. I have considered which conditions are required having regard to the tests contained in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It is necessary to include both the standard time limit condition and a condition to specify the approved plans to provide clarity on what has been approved.
21. I have considered the Council's proposed materials condition, but it relates to the proposed extension and it not necessary to include as that part of the proposal has not been granted planning permission in this decision.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all material considerations, I conclude that a split decision is appropriate and the proposed alterations to the shopfront are allowed, and the proposed two storey rear extension is dismissed.

N Perrins

INSPECTOR