
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2018

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th October 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/18/3206888

1 Bramber Avenue, Hove BN3 8GW

- 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 S Dziura against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application, Ref. BH2017/03666, dated 2 November 2017, was refused by notice dated 22 June 2018.
 - The development proposed is a ground floor side bedroom extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a ground floor side bedroom extension at 1 Bramber Avenue, Hove in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. BH2017/03666, dated 2 November 2017, 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 development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Nos. 2746-1; 2746-2; 2746-3; 2746-4; 2746-5 Rev. B;
 - 3) 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.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene of Bramber Avenue.

Reasons

3. The Council's concern is that the proposed extension would be too wide, stretching to the boundary with No. 3, and would not be set back from the dwelling's front elevation. It is considered that the effect of this would be to create an appearance of the total loss of space between the house and its boundary and of the extension not being sufficiently subservient.
 4. However, I saw on my visit that this is an unusual situation that can reasonably warrant some flexibility of approach and departure from design guidelines as regards width. Firstly, Nos. 1 and 3 Bramber Avenue are on a bend with the result that their nearest front corners are much closer to one another than
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those at the rear. This unusually wide frontage, roughly divided equally between Nos. 1 and 3, creates an opportunity for an extension that is wider than half that of the host dwelling. This is especially so because almost half the extension's frontage would crank back to align with No. 3 in order to turn the corner, and also because the addition for the most part replicates an existing brick built outbuilding.

5. In fact, the extension would be very slightly higher than the existing brick wall and set forward of it, albeit a modest setback from the front elevation is proposed rather than being flush with it as the officer's report claims. The intervention of the porch would also help to disguise the small extent of the setback. And whilst the Council says that the extensions' width and lack of a proper set back precludes it from being perceived as subservient to the dwelling, I consider that the single storey height, flat roof design and the change of alignment for part of its width do in fact enable the addition to be read as clearly subordinate to the main building.
6. As regards the painted render, in my view it gives an attractive contemporary appearance to the dwelling and note that a number of houses in the area have been similarly altered. I consider that the Council's preference to use facing brickwork for the front wall of the extension would be read as being incongruous in relation to the host dwelling.
7. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of either the host dwelling or the street scene of Bramber Avenue. Accordingly, there would be no conflict with Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005 (retained on the adoption of the Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One 2016) or with Section 12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places' of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.
8. I shall therefore allow the appeal. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is needed for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A condition requiring matching external materials will safeguard visual amenity.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR