



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 July 2010

by **John Chase** MCD Dip Arch RIBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

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Decision date:
3 August 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/10/2129813 11 Surrenden Crescent, Brighton, BN1 6WE

- 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 James Oliver against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
- The application Ref BH2010/00396, dated 13 February 2010, was refused by notice dated 30 April 2010.
- The development proposed is the extension and remodelling of the existing house.

Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main issue

2. I consider that the main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Surrenden Crescent is composed of detached houses, of differing styles and materials, but within the overall context of traditional, post war, pitched roof design. The proposal is to transform the present chalet style house into a modern, rectilinear, flat roofed building of two storeys, extending back on the site to a secondary frontage onto Peacock Lane, at the rear.
4. Whilst the building would have an entirely different architectural treatment from its neighbours, this would not necessarily be a reason to reject the scheme. I also accept that there is a distinct break of character to the east of the site, where the house at No 13 Surrenden Crescent is some way separated from the appeal house, and elevated above it, as well as having a property to its rear, whereas the appeal site, and the others to the west, occupy the whole of the land between the roads.
5. However, the existing house is clearly associated with the line of properties on the west side, as they step up the hill, and particularly the neighbouring house at No 9 Surrenden Crescent, which is also a chalet style building. There is a relatively narrow gap between the houses, so that the new development would result in a sudden and unsympathetic change of appearance, compounded by the new two storey elevation standing above the eaves of the neighbour, to create a dominating impression when viewed from Surrenden Crescent. It would remain visible despite the avenue of trees along the street frontage.

6. The projection of the house towards the rear of the site would be evident on the eastern side, where there would be a long, one and two storey wall adjacent to the boundary. It would give the house a bulk and scale which would be out of keeping with the general character of housing in the area, which is typically composed of much shallower buildings, set within their plots.
7. I recognise the potential benefits of the scheme, in terms of making the best use of the land, and in creating a tidier appearance to the property when viewed from the rear. However, for the reasons given above I consider that the development would fail to satisfy Policies QD1, QD2 and QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005, the broad thrust of which is to require a high standard of design, which is sympathetic to the prevailing character of the locality. Whilst I accept that the proposal is, in itself, an interesting and innovative design, with a balanced and well considered appearance, it does not take adequate account of its surroundings, for which reason I conclude on the main issue that the development would harm the character and appearance of the area.
8. I note the concerns of neighbours about the perceived damage to living conditions which would arise out of the development. The Council's Officers' Report has dealt with these matters in some detail, and I do not have reason to disagree with the conclusion that the proposal would be acceptable in these respects. However, this does not outweigh the harm which I have identified under the main issue, which indicates that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Chase

INSPECTOR