



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 November 2011

by P W Clark MA MRTPI MCI

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

Decision date: 6 December 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/11/2162641
39 Solway Avenue, Brighton BN1 8UJ

- 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 Matt Woodhart against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2011/01915, dated 29 June 2011, was refused by notice dated 5 September 2011.
 - The development proposed is a two storey side extension with dormers to the rear and a raised decking area to the rear elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene. The property is sited on the inside of an acutely angled junction between Solway Avenue and Braeside Avenue. This, together with its position at the top of a hill, means that its rear elevation is prominent in the ascent of Braeside Avenue.
3. Most of the properties in Solway Avenue and in the part of Braeside Avenue adjacent are semi-detached bungalows. They have a common form in which the main body of accommodation is under a hipped roof aligned parallel to the road. A lower, gable fronted wing projects forward at either end of the pair. Many of the gables in Solway Avenue, but not in Braeside, have a bonnet, or half hip.
4. The dwellings in Braeside Avenue and the end properties in Solway Avenue, including the appeal site, are chalet bungalows. That is to say that they are two storey properties but the upper floor has a reduced area contained entirely within the roofspace, lit by flat topped dormers, two or three casements wide.
5. Exceptionally, the appeal property is detached. Where there would be a party wall on others in the area, it has a gable end, topped with a bonnet or half hip. Additionally, perhaps to mark its significant position in the angle between the two streets, its lower wing projects further forward than others and is given an elaborate half-timbered treatment, jettied over a ground floor bay window.
6. As the appellant's appeal statement points out, the combination of the truncated main body of the dwelling and the enlarged and elaborated front projection does make the existing property appear somewhat unbalanced.

However, as these features all derive from a common form shared with others in the area, it is an exaggeration to say that it is out of keeping with its neighbours.

7. The proposal would extend the main body of the house towards Braeside Avenue, replicating its bonneted gable end about 1m away from the side boundary. It would convert the opposite, fully hipped, end into a bonneted gable. It would add a second wing projecting towards Solway Avenue, matching the original and forming a valley gutter between the two. All this, which copies or derives from features of the existing building, gives rise to no objection.
8. However, in the rear roof slope, which is prominently visible from Braeside Avenue, the existing flat topped two light dormer which matches others in the area would be replaced by a wider, three light window under a hipped roof. It would project slightly further forward than the existing so that its sill would no longer sit comfortably on the roof slope but would be raised slightly above it. The combination of greater width, greater projection and pitched roof would make it bulky and out of proportion with the rest of the house.
9. A second dormer would be added in the extension. This would house a Juliet balcony so that, instead of sitting back in the roof slope, it would project well forward, in line with the wall of the rear elevation of the ground floor. In consequence, its flanks would be large. It would be wider than the French windows it would house, so would have tile hanging to its front face, adding unnecessarily to its bulk. It too would have a pitched, hipped roof. Its combination of unnecessary width, greater projection and pitched roof would make it bulky and out of proportion with the rest of the house.
10. Furthermore, it would be positioned on the axis of the internal dimensions of the room so that it would be uncomfortably close to the flank wall of the extended property, neither aligned with the windows of the room below nor symmetrical with the first dormer. This would give it an awkward appearance.
11. It is proposed to demolish a garage on the boundary with number 37. This would open up the garden of that property to overlooking from the decking proposed as part of the appeal. This issue could be resolved by a condition to require screening along the boundary to the same height as the wall of the garage, so is not a reason to dismiss the appeal. The appeal is dismissed because of the effects of the two dormers on the street scene, in which they would be prominent.
12. I conclude that the two dormers proposed as part of this appeal would harm the character and appearance of the street scene. They would be contrary to policy QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan which, amongst other things, requires alterations to be well designed and sited in relation to their surroundings.

P. W. Clark

Inspector