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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 May 2013

**by Mrs S A F Simpson LLB Solicitor (N-P)**

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

Decision date: 20 June 2013

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/A/13/2190900**  
**149 Godwin Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 7FS**

- 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 Andrew Carter against the decision of the Brighton & Hove City Council.
  - The application Ref BH2012/03179, dated 1 October 2012, was refused by a notice dated 11 December 2012.
  - The development proposed is described as the "erection of a 2 no bedroom house adjoining existing dwelling with new entrance to side".
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matter

2. The appeal form includes the amended description of the development as contained in the Council's decision notice. As I consider the amendment does not alter, but more accurately describes the proposed development, I have used the same description for the purposes of determining the appeal.

## Main Issues

3. The main issues are (i) the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area and (ii) its effect on the living conditions of future occupiers.

## Reasons

### *Character and appearance*

4. The immediate residential area is characterised by regularly spaced pairs of semi-detached houses. There are a few examples of large blocks of terraced housing and the more modern development at Old School Place but, overall, it is the prevailing regular size of the large semi-detached properties with their consistent design and the provision of enclosed front gardens that combine to provide a definite rhythm to the street scenes along both Godwin Road and Stapley Road.
  5. The new dwelling would be formed by a two-storey addition to the flank elevation of No 149, a semi-detached house on the corner of the junction with
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Stapley Road. It would respect the building lines of properties along both its road frontages; re-introduce a full hipped roof restoring symmetry to the roofline; be constructed in matching materials and retain a front entrance along the Stapley Road frontage.

6. However, as the proposed house would be just over half the width of No 149 - it would provide the impression of having been added on in a plot which is too narrow to accommodate a dwelling of comparable size either to its newly formed terraced neighbours or other properties in the locality. As a consequence, the development would appear cramped and incongruous and would unbalance and interrupt the established rhythm of the street scene along Godwin Road.
7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would fail either to enhance or make a positive contribution to the visual quality of the local environment and would be contrary to Policies QD1 and QD2 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan. It would also be contrary to similar advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework which states that poor design that fails to improve the quality and character of an area and the way it functions should be resisted.

*Living conditions*

8. I note that the development meets the requirements of the Lifetime Home Standards but, even so, the Council has reservations about the amount of useable habitable floor space that would be provided within the dwelling. I agree that the living accommodation would be on the small and cramped side and, therefore, the available choice of furniture and its layout would be severely limited. Nevertheless, I see no reason why the unit would not serve the needs of a couple or single person who may not mind these disadvantages.
9. For these reasons, I conclude that, although small, the development would produce a reasonable standard of living conditions for a certain sector of the housing market and, so, be consistent with the aims and objectives of Policy QD27 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan.

*Conclusion*

10. In arriving at my conclusion, I have taken into account the Appellant's references to other developments in the locality. However, I find no direct comparison between the wider two-storey extension at 131 Stapley Road, the subservient nature of the extension at 154 Hangleton Road and the narrow and cramped form of development that I have identified would result were this scheme to be permitted. I also note the Appellant's submissions regarding the way his planning application was determined by the Council but find, none of these matters, nor any other raised, to be of sufficient weight to overcome the development plan conflict I have identified on the first issue and, for that reason, the appeal must fail.

*S A F Simpson*

INSPECTOR