



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 November 2013

by **S Holden BSc MSc CEng TPP MRTPI FCIHT**

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

Decision date: 4 December 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/13/2207833
7 Queen Caroline Close, Hove, BN3 6WW

- 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 R Patel against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/02095 was refused by notice dated 28 August 2013.
 - The development proposed is two storey rear extension and porch to front entrance.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. The main issues are:
 - a) the effects of the proposed extensions to the front and rear of the house on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area;
 - b) the effect of the proposed rear extension on the living conditions of the adjoining properties in relation to visual intrusion and overshadowing.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. Queen Caroline Close is a cul-de-sac serving a dozen modern, detached two-storey dwellings set in small plots. It is part of a larger residential estate on the outskirts of Hove. The proposal is to construct a front porch and a two-storey rear extension to No 7.
4. Although the houses are not identical, several have mono-pitched roofs that extend across the front elevations above the ground floor bay windows. These features help to integrate the attached garages with the remainder of the dwellings and provide limited shelter over the front entrances. The proposed porch at No 7 would disrupt this feature and enclose an area that would project beyond this roof and the front elevation of the house. The additional depth of the porch, together with its pitched roof with a gable front would result in it failing to integrate satisfactorily with the host property. It would also appear to be an alien and incongruous addition to the street scene, as it would be at odds with the common features of the surrounding properties, especially those on either side of No 7. I consider this would adversely affect the street scene.

5. The proposed rear extension would replace the existing conservatory. However, it would be deeper, projecting further into the garden and would occupy the full width of the house. Its ridge height would be only just below that of the existing dwelling. The result would be a large and bulky extension that would appear out of proportion with the host property. The proposal would dominate and overwhelm the existing house, rather than being subservient to it. I consider this would be to the detriment of its original character and style.
6. Although the proposed rear extension would not be visible from Queen Caroline Close, it would be seen from the houses and gardens in the surrounding area. As a consequence of its enlargement it would appear more prominent and out of keeping with its neighbours. I consider this would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area as a whole.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document: *Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations* (SPD12), adopted in June 2013, advises that extensions should not dominate or detract from the original building or the character of an area. They should play a subordinate 'supporting role' that respects the design, scale and proportions of the host building. It advises that extensions should not be deeper than half the depth of the main body of the original building. It also recommends that roofs of extensions should be set lower than the main ridge of the building. The scale and proportions of the proposal would conflict with this advice.
8. I therefore conclude that the front porch and two-storey rear extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. They would be contrary to saved Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan, which requires development to be well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the host building, adjoining properties and the surrounding area. The proposal would also fail to comply with the advice set out in SPD12.

Living conditions

9. The flank walls of Nos 6 and 7 are close to the shared boundary. No 6 is set back on its plot and has a conservatory. However, the proposed extension would project beyond the rear elevation of No 6. Its height and depth would therefore introduce a sense of enclosure for the occupants of No 6. This would be apparent from the conservatory and in the part of the garden closest to the house. There would also be a loss of outlook from the ground floor window near the shared boundary. The proposed extension would therefore appear visually intrusive and overbearing, making the house and garden of No 6 a less pleasant place to be. Furthermore, the position of the proposed extension, to the south of No 6, would give rise to overshadowing of the area immediately adjacent to its rear elevation. This would also adversely affect the living conditions of the occupants.
10. The garage of No 8 is attached to the northern side of this adjoining property and there is therefore a significant gap between the flank walls of Nos 7 and 8. Although the additional bulk of the proposed extension could be seen from No 8 and its rear garden, the separation distance between the two dwellings would prevent it appearing visually intrusive. Neither would there be any harmful loss of outlook from the ground floor windows.

11. Notwithstanding the lack of harm to the occupants of No 8, I conclude that the proposed extension would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupants of No 6 arising from visual intrusion and overshadowing. It would therefore be contrary to saved Policies QD14 and QD27 of the Local Plan, both of which seek to protect the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
12. I appreciate that neither of the neighbours have objected to the proposal and this led the appellant to believe that his application would be acceptable. However, I must consider the longer-term effects of the development on both existing and potential future occupants and in doing so I have found that it would be harmful to the occupants of No 6.

Other matter

13. I note that the appellant was dissatisfied with the way in which the Council handled the application. However, this is not a matter for me to consider in the context of this appeal, which is confined to a consideration of the proposal on its individual planning merits.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other relevant matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR