



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2013

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 24 December 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/13/2208663
44 Hill Brow, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 6QH.

- 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 Mrs Sue Chapple against the decision of Brighton and Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/02979, dated 28 August 2013, was refused by notice dated 24 October 2013.
 - The development proposed is described as proposed pitched roof first floor extension to form an additional bedroom with en-suite, new en-suite and extension to an existing bedroom. Existing roof to be re-covered with slates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed first floor extension on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area by virtue of its scale and projection.

Reasons

3. Although a large three storey detached house the property the subject of this appeal, 44 Hill Brow, appears as just two storeys high when viewed directly from the street. It is sited on a steeply sloping site and set down below street level. In addition to the site sloping east to west, it also reflects the fall of the road north to south such that the neighbouring dwellings either side are set on individual plateaus to reflect this change in level.
 4. In addition to a single storey double garage that projects about 5.6 metres or so in front of the main façade of the house, in a similar arrangement to neighbouring properties, number 44 also has a single storey addition at the front to the dining room. The dwelling immediately to the north, although set on higher ground, when viewed from the street is of a similar scale to number 44, while that to the south appears to be just single storey.
 5. Hill Brow curves quite noticeably in front of the buildings to the north of the appeal site. As the houses on this side of the street tend also to be set back a
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similar distance from the road, a building line has been established that reflects the curve of the road.

6. While retaining the existing footprint, the appellant proposes an extension at first floor level built to the front of the dwelling. This would project out over the existing single storey garage and dining room projections. The additional accommodation would be achieved by forming two new gables to the street façade, the larger of which would span across the full width of the existing property, while the narrower gable would extend about 2.5 metres in front of the larger one.
7. The proposed full width gable would line through with the existing front elevation of the dining room. Due to the relative position of one property to another, the face of the full width gable would be set back behind the first floor street façade of the house to the north. Having regard, therefore, to the curved building line at this point, I am not persuaded that this part of the proposal would impact on it. However, the smaller gable, while not extending the footprint of the building forward of its current position, would fall just in front of the projected building line of the properties when drawn at first floor level. However, as the curve of the road is starting to flatten out at this point, and as the property to the south is only single storey, I do not consider that this small incursion in front of the building line, when taken at first floor level, would in itself cause material harm to considerations of consistency and continuity as feared by the Council.
8. To my mind the front elevation would in itself appear as a pleasing and well mannered elevation. However, in order to achieve this, the flank elevations of the property and the new roof would be extended forward. When seen in profile and despite the slight variation in the new and existing ridge lines and what would in terms of an increase in floor area be a small addition, the extensions would in reality result in a significant visual enlargement of the dwelling. The dwelling as extended would be prominent and open to view from the street, particularly from the south due to the reduced massing of number 42. The plethora of windows proposed to this façade, and the uncomfortable relationship of the extensions with the small section of the garage roof to be retained, would further serve to draw the eye to what would appear a visually discordant element of the design.
9. To some extent the introduction of the smaller gable, due to its lower ridge line, would as illustrated tend to break up the overall mass of the addition when viewed from some directions. However, on balance and while having regard to the scale of number 42 and the possibility of this changing over time, I consider that the proposed extensions, when taken together, would appear as incongruous and excessively dominant additions due to their three dimensional form, excessive scale and prominence in the street scene. To my mind they would therefore cause significant harm to the form of the architectural integrity of the original building and the positive characteristics of the street scene. Consequently, the proposal would not accord with the objectives of Policies QD1, QD2 and QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005 as they relate to, amongst other things, the quality of design and the enhancement of the positive qualities of the area.

Conclusions

10. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, including the eclectic mix of styles and sizes of neighbouring and nearby dwellings, the number of other examples of recently restyled properties in the area, the desirability of updating and modernising the property and the choice of materials, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR