
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2014

by L Gibbons BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 February 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/13/2210732

8 Hill Drive, Hove BN3 6QN

- 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 Ghar Cheung against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/03039, dated 27 August 2013, was refused by notice dated 30 October 2013.
 - The development proposed is a two storey extension and the raising of the existing roofline to provide second floor accommodation with rear and front rooflights (revisions to BH2013/01166).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the appeal proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the effect on the living conditions of the occupiers of No 6 Hill Drive in respect of outlook.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal property is a relatively modern two storey detached house. It is one of four properties which are very similar in size and design. A key element of the rear elevation of the appeal property is its simple design and it appears to be relatively unchanged in its external appearance. I accept that the proposal would be constructed using the same materials as the existing building and that it does not include dormers which were part of a previous planning application (BH2013/01166). I also note that planning permission has been previously granted for a full width single storey extension.
4. However, the two storey extension by reason of its height and size would appear very bulky against the proportions of the host property. The first floor elevation on the rear of Nos 2 to 8 Hill Drive appears to be largely unchanged and as a consequence the proposed alteration to the house would look particularly out of place. Moreover, the windows on the first floor would be noticeably different in style, positioning and size compared to the existing windows on the host property.

5. In relation to the roof, I note that the Council do not object to the proposed increase in the height of the main roof. However, the hipped elements of the roof of the proposed extension would clearly not match the design of the main pitched roof and would look bulky in comparison. In addition, the eaves of the roof of the proposed extension would extend slightly beyond the side walls of the property, resulting in a feature that would look out of place against the simple outline of the rest of the building.
6. The building lines of Nos 2 to 8 are very similar, although No 10 is slightly forward of No 8. The appellant has submitted that there is variety in the building lines along Hill Drive, however no further information has been provided and in any event each proposal must be judged on its own merits. The proposed extension would result in the rear elevation of No 8 being forward of No 10 and appreciably forward of No 6, thereby altering the building line with both adjacent properties. Against this background, the argument that that the proposal would simply repeat the concept of the building lines that exists between Nos 10 and 8 carries little weight.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations (SPD) 2012 at Section 2 refers to the original design of the building in informing the design of extensions and alterations. The appellant submits that the proposal would enhance the appearance of the house and would be preferable to the single storey flat roof extension. I do not have the details of the single storey extension before me to be able to make a comparison. Moreover, the proposed two storey extension would wholly conceal the original simple design of the rear elevation to the detriment of the host property. It would seem to be overly dominant in relation to the proportions of the house and would not appear subordinate to the host property.
8. For these reasons I conclude that the appeal proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property. It would conflict with policy QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan (LP) 2005, which amongst other things seeks to ensure that extensions and alterations are well designed in relation to the property and the surrounding area. It would be contrary to the SPD and contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework relating to the need for high quality design.

Living conditions

9. Due to the hilly nature of the area, No 6 Hill Drive is on lower ground than that of No 8, this is more noticeable to the side and rear of the properties. The appellant submits that the change in building line may result in additional privacy between the two properties and that there would not be to a significant increase in overshadowing due to the orientation of the properties. However, due to the depth of the proposed extension, the side wall and roof would be highly visible and would appear unduly intrusive to the occupiers of No 6 at both ground and first floor level.
10. Moreover, due to the difference in height between the two properties and the location of the proposed extension close to the boundary with No 6, I consider it would lead to a significant sense of being enclosed for the occupiers of No 6, particularly when within the conservatory.

11. For these reasons I conclude that the appeal proposal would cause harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of No 6 Hill Drive in respect of outlook. It would conflict with policies QD14 and QD27 of the LP which amongst other things seeks to ensure developments which would not result in a significant loss of amenity to neighbouring properties and occupiers.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters, the appeal is dismissed.

L Gibbons

INSPECTOR