
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2014

by Elizabeth Lawrence BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 April 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/A/13/2207863
168A Old Shoreham Road, Hove, BN3 7AR.

- 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 Dr Harjinder Heer against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/02373, dated 15 July 2013, was refused by notice dated 26 September 2013.
 - The development proposed is roof dormer extension to existing flat.
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Preliminary matter

1. On 6 March 2014 the Planning Practice Guidance (planning guidance) was published by the Department for Communities & Local Government. In relation to this Appeal the planning guidance refers to the design statements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which are addressed in this decision

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the host property, the terrace and the wider surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The Appeal site is located within an area of early 19th century terraced properties, with two storey rear outriggers. There is a strong sense of uniformity in the front and rear elevations of the individual terraces, which are arranged in a formal grid pattern of streets, on land which falls away gently to the south. The upper rear elevations and roofs of the terraces between Leighton Road and Sackville Road are prominent within the street scene and make a valuable contribution to the uniformity and rhythm within the terraces.
 5. Policy QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan requires extensions to be well designed sited and detailed both in relation to the host and adjoining properties. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document 12: *Design guide*
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for extensions and alterations is consistent with policy QD14. It advises that box dormers constructed using the full width (and/or height) of the roof are an inappropriate design solution. Instead dormer windows should be kept as small as possible and be seen as a subordinate addition to the roof, set well in from the sides of the roof. Large areas of cladding should be avoided and as a rule of thumb the dormer should not be substantially larger than the window itself unless the particular design of the building and its context dictate otherwise.

6. The proposed dormer would stretch across almost the full width of the rear roof slope and would project up to the main rear elevation of the property. It would include large areas of tiled cladding and the proposed sash window would be disproportionately large when compared to the central sash window at first floor level. The proposed high level window would project slightly above the existing roof parapet and would be uncharacteristic and squat. The roof of the dormer would similarly project above the existing roof parapet, which would increase its visibility from the west.
7. As a result of these combined factors the proposed dormer would appear top heavy, incongruous and totally out of keeping with the host property and the terrace as a whole. It would seriously harm the character and appearance of the host property and the terrace and would have a degrading impact on the back garden environment area. As stated in the NPPF permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.
8. It is acknowledged that the dormer would increase the size and improve the circulation area within the bathroom, which would benefit the occupants of the flat. However, this benefit would be significantly outweighed by the visual harm the dormer would cause to the character and appearance of the host property and the terrace as a whole.
9. It is noted that there are a number of dormer extensions in the locality and they have blended in with the host terraces with varying degrees of success. Rather than setting a precedent they highlight the need to consider each proposal on its individual merits and in light of the prevailing planning policies.
10. Finally, the concerns regarding the nature of the use of the premises are noted, however as the scheme would purely increase the size of a bathroom it would have little effect on the scope of the accommodation provided within the building as a whole. Any other alterations or proposals affecting the premises fall outside the scope of this Appeal.
11. For these reasons I conclude that the scheme would have a materially harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host property, the terrace and the wider surrounding area. It would therefore conflict with policy QD14 of the Local Plan, the SPD and the NPPF.

Elizabeth Lawrence

INSPECTOR