
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 April 2014

by Louise Phillips MA (Cantab), MSc, MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30 April 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/A/14/2212395

The Atlas, 253 Old Shoreham Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 7EB

- 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 D Roberts, Fourteen Investments Ltd, against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/03554, dated 17 October 2013, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2013.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a ground floor single storey extension to the rear garden area.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a public house/restaurant on a large corner plot at the junction of Old Shoreham Road and Holmes Avenue. Old Shoreham Road is a busy main route comprising both residential and commercial uses, while Holmes Avenue is a residential side street composed primarily of semi-detached houses of an older style with pitched roofs.
4. The existing pub is constructed of rendered brick and is part two-storey and part single-storey in height. Both sections have pitched tiled roofs. The property has a couple of single storey extensions to the rear, but these are small relative to the size of the main building. The building is presently vacant and boarded up. Whilst it does not appear to be in a particularly poor state of repair, rubbish bags are accumulating in the parking areas and the site is beginning to look untidy.
5. The proposed development is a single storey, flat roofed extension to the rear of the building, which would replace the existing single storey additions. The extension would provide a dining area and new toilet facilities in 129sqm of additional ground floor space. It would be approximately 7m deep and would extend across the back of both the single-storey and two-storey elements of the main building. Thus it would occupy a significant proportion of the existing beer garden and would be very large relative to the host property.

6. The flat roof of the proposed extension would be completely at odds with the pitched roof design of the main building. It would be lower than the eaves of the existing single-storey wing, but given its overall expanse, this would not make the extension appear subordinate to the main building. Whilst the proposed elevations and fenestration would be finished to match the existing building, this would not be sufficient to offset its bulky and incongruous appearance.
7. I have taken account of the design provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), including paragraph 60, which states that planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes. However, it is my view that the proposed extension would have a purely functional appearance which would not be sympathetic to that of the host property.
8. The extension would not be seen from Old Shoreham Road and I accept that views from Holmes Avenue would be limited to a small number of public vantage points. However, it would be clearly visible in the gap adjacent to No 1 Holmes Avenue looking south towards Old Shoreham Road. In addition to seeing the substantial depth of the addition, it would also be possible to look down onto the expanse of flat roof because Holmes Avenue is at a significantly higher level than the appeal site. This would be out of keeping with the more traditional roof forms present in Holmes Avenue and the uncharacteristic appearance of the extension would be harmful to the street scene.
9. I agree with the appellant that reopening the pub would improve the street scene in Old Shoreham Road by providing an active frontage, but this does not justify the harm I have identified which would persist in the long term. Therefore I conclude that the proposed development would be significantly detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. Thus it would conflict with Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan, 2005. Amongst other things, this states that extensions to existing buildings should be well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the property to be extended and to the surrounding area.

Other Matters

10. The Framework defines sustainable development in terms of its economic and social roles as well as its environmental one and I have had regard to these benefits of the proposal in determining the appeal. However, paragraph 8 of the Framework makes it clear that these roles should not be pursued in isolation and that economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Therefore the economic and social benefits of the proposal would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area.
11. In reaching my decision, I have had regard to the recently published Planning Practice Guidance, but it does not alter my conclusions in this case.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Louise Phillips

INSPECTOR