



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2014

by Michael Evans BA MA MPhil DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 October 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/14/2225148

31 Beacon Hill, Brighton, BN2 7BN

- 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 & Mrs Jason and Natasha Hughes against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2014/02095 was refused by notice dated 19 August 2014.
 - The development proposed is indicated on the application form to be a new dormer, a new roof terrace with access through the roof and two replacement windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a new dormer, a new roof terrace with access through the roof and two replacement windows, at 31 Beacon Hill, Brighton, BN2 7BN, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref BH2014/02095, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 678/PP/03.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the dormer extension shall match those used in the existing building.

Main issue

2. The main issue in the consideration of this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal concerns a detached dwelling of a chalet style design. The new dormer addition would be set back from the side and there would be reasonably generous gaps to the eaves and ridge, so that it would appear subordinate to the roofslope. The new terrace would result in not much more than about a third of the length of the fairly gently sloping roof above the single storey front addition being removed to provide a flat surface. A fairly modest part of the main roof would also be lost to construct a recessed door. As a result the extent of the alteration of the existing roofs would be reasonably limited,

especially with regard to the main roof, while the original form would not be changed.

4. In relation to the terrace only the balustrade would project forward and because of the use of glass this would have a transparent and lightweight appearance. The top would also be significantly lower than the ridge of the main roof. These aspects would prevent the balustrade appearing unduly dominant and unsympathetic. In consequence of these factors, the terrace would not form an awkward protrusion to the front elevation and the existing roof form would remain readily apparent. In my view the development would also add visual interest to what is a relatively bland building.
5. The terrace would be located broadly in the centre of the dwelling and the gaps to the dormer additions to either side would be fairly similar. Although the new dormer addition would be closer to the side than the existing feature at the opposite end, this would be visually balanced by its smaller size. Despite not being symmetrical the resultant dwelling would have a relatively balanced appearance, especially by comparison with the existing somewhat lopsided character resulting from the presence of a single dormer addition towards one end. Rather than resulting in visual clutter in conjunction with the terrace, the new dormer addition would enhance the appearance of the property.
6. The Council points out that the two examples of roof terraces in the vicinity of the appeal site do not have the benefit of planning permission. However, there is no evidence of any intent to secure their removal. There are balustrades with vertical railings at both these properties. These would be noticeably more prominent in the streetscene than the glazed feature at the appeal site, even with the associated terraces being smaller in area.
7. In any event, even disregarding these features the surrounding context is significantly varied in terms of matters such as materials, scale, roof form and the presence or otherwise of dormer additions, as well as their precise number and design. In this context the development would not disrupt any appreciable sense of regularity or consistency.
8. Moreover, for all the above reasons the proposal would complement, reinforce and enhance the diversity of design found in the locality, while improving the streetscene and the appearance of the existing dwelling. In consequence, there would be no harm to the character and appearance of the locality.
9. The development would be consistent with the intention of Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005, Policies QD1 and QD14 to seek a high standard of design, as well as that of Policy QD2 to emphasise and enhance the positive qualities of the neighbourhood.
10. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) spd12, design guide for extensions and alterations, June 2013, indicates that unless the particular character of the area dictates otherwise, in most cases terraces to the front of buildings will be unacceptable because of their negative impact on the appearance of the building and streetscape. Having regard to the character of the area in this case and the absence of any negative impact, there would be no conflict with the SPD.
11. The proposal would accord with the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework that planning should always seek to secure high quality design and take account of the character of different areas.

12. Taking account of all other matters raised, there are no considerations sufficient to justify rejecting the proposal and the appeal succeeds.

13. A condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans is necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. The facing materials of the dormer addition should match those of the host dwelling in order to protect the appearance of the locality.

M Evans

INSPECTOR