



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 October 2014

by Cullum J A Parker BA(Hons) MA MRTPI AIEMA

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

Decision date: 27 October 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/14/2225358

20 Margaret Street, Brighton, BN2 1TS

- 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 Chris and Mrs Suki Stephens against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2014/01507, dated 8 May 2014, was refused by notice dated 3 July 2014.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as '*the construction of two new rear dormers*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of two new rear dormers at 20 Margaret Street, Brighton, BN2 1TS in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref BH2014/01507, dated 8 May 2014, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not 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: E01, E02, E03, P07, P08 & P09.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the East Cliff Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The proposed dwelling is a mid-terrace dwelling split over three floors, with living accommodation in the roof. To the front there is a lead dormer with window, with a lead dormer in the rear roof slope providing access to a boarded terrace area. The appeal site lies within the East Cliff Conservation Area, which covers a large part of the eastern part of the City of Brighton. It was clear from my site visit that the part of the conservation in which the appeal site is characterised by terraced properties, mainly dating from the Victorian/Edwardian epochs. The significance of the Conservation Area appears to derive from the fact that it represents a tight-knit built form, which is mainly typified by terraced buildings. In particular, in the rear roof slopes of buildings facing both Margaret and Wentworth Streets, there are a number of examples of dormers and other roof alterations.

4. The proposed development seeks the insertion of two dormers in the rear roof slope. These would be of a similar design to a rear dormer housing a set of double doors, providing access to a terraced area at roof level. The dormers would be located either side of the existing dormer and use matching materials. They would not be readily visible from the front elevation or from ground floor level to the rear. I acknowledge the Council's concerns that the proposed dormers would have differing sizes and contrasting alignments. However, in terms of overall design and materials, they would match the existing dormer. Moreover, the asymmetrical positioning and size of the dormers are more typical on historic buildings, being generally reflective of both the evolutionary development of the building and the practicalities of internal restrictions of room layouts and roof construction.
5. Policy QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005 (BHLP) indicates that extensions and alterations to existing buildings will only be granted if it is well designed, sited and detailed. This is supported by Supplementary Planning Document SPD 12 – Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations 2013 (SPD). The SPD explains that dormer windows should be kept as small as possible and clearly be a subordinate addition to the roof. In this case, the proposed dormers would be set down from the ridge and up from the eaves by some distance and set in from the flanks of the property's roof. As such, the dormers would appear as subordinate additions to the roof.
6. The culmination of their limited visibility in the public realm, the use of matching materials and similar design, and their subordinate relationship with both the host property and its roof, leads me to conclude that the proposed development would not detract from the significance of the Conservation Area and that it would enhance the character and appearance of the East Cliff Conservation Area.
7. Accordingly, I find that the proposed development would not have a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the East Cliff Conservation Area. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would accord with Policy QD14 of the BHLP, as supported by SPD12, which seek the aforesaid aims.

Conditions

8. I have had regard to paragraph 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Practice Planning Guidance in terms of the use of planning conditions. A condition requiring the proposed development to be constructed in accordance with the submitted drawings, which also show the proposed materials, is necessary for the avoidance of doubt and to preserve the character and appearance of the East Cliff Conservation Area.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Cullum J A Parker

INSPECTOR