
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 April 2016

by Martin Andrews MA(Planning) BSc(Econ) DipTP & DipTP(Dist) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 May 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/16/3142599

8 Highfield Crescent, Brighton BN1 8JD

- 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 Steve Morgan against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application, Ref. BH2015/03821, dated 19 October 2015, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2015.
 - The development proposed is a rear ground floor extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a rear ground floor extension at 8 Highfield Crescent, Brighton in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref. BH2015/03821, dated 19 October 2015, 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 shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing Nos. 01; 02; 03; 04;
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Main Issue

2. The main issue the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling.

Reasons

3. The original dwelling is a bungalow on a road that slopes down to both the north and the west. The building already has a two storey extension to the rear which takes advantage of the lower land level to the west. The appeal proposal is to add a further single storey extension on to that earlier addition at a still lower level. The Council's concern is that the host dwelling would be over-extended by an inappropriate and bulky addition.
 4. I recognise that the existing two storey extension approved by the Council in 2011 together with the current single storey further addition would by any normal standards, including those in the Council's SPD12 Design Guide for
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Extensions and Alterations 2013, amount to an over-extension of the original bungalow.

5. However in this case, because of the steep (as opposed to 'slight' in the Planning Officer's report) westward fall in the land to the rear, the existing two storey extension is not at all visible from Highfield Road. Nor do I consider that it is prominent in views from the rear garden of neighbouring dwellings, whilst to the limited extent that it can be seen it does not appear bulky or incongruous.
6. The further single storey addition now proposed would be entirely to the rear of the existing two storey addition and the above factors would again apply, albeit to an even greater degree. In addition, the garage of No. 8 would screen the development from No. 6 and the property's much lower level than No. 10 negates any possibility of an adverse impact on that dwelling.
7. Furthermore, in addition to this lack of prominence, the step down of the two extensions is a logical addition that maintains a coherent and acceptable building profile from the limited private views. The Council says that the character of the original bungalow will be lost given the over-extended appearance, but this has already happened as a result of the two storey extension. I also saw on my visit that a considerable length of rear garden would remain, so there is no issue of overdevelopment in relation to the plot.
8. Because of these site-specific considerations I conclude that there would be no harmful conflict with Policy QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005 or with Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. I shall therefore allow the appeal.
9. I shall impose a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. A condition relating to external materials will safeguard the appearance of the host dwelling.

Martin Andrews

INSPECTOR