



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2017

by **S J Papworth DipArch(Glos) RIBA**

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

Decision date: 3 November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/W/17/3178227

23a Arundel Street, Brighton BN2 5TG

- 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 Ms Karen O'Rourke against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2017/01011, dated 23 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is loft conversion including dormer to rear to accommodate the staircase to the loft. Two roof lights to the front. Associated internal alterations.
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Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Reasons

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed dormer on the terrace group and the character and appearance of the area. Policy CP12 of the Brighton and Hove City Plan Part One and Policy QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan seek good urban design and with regard to extensions, these are to be well-designed, sited and detailed in relation to the property, adjoining properties and the surrounding area, among other considerations. Supplementary Planning Document 12 is a design guide for extensions and alterations and section 3.5 on roof extension makes clear that not all roof spaces are suitable for extension. With regard to dormers, these should not be on front or side roof slopes, and should be kept as small as possible as a clearly subordinate addition, well off the sides, ridge and eaves of the roof.
3. There have been previous iterations of the design, and it is drawing 1641/02B that is the subject at Appeal, being the drawing considered by the Council. The previous changes appear to concern the proportions of the dormer, and between tile hanging and window, a matter referred to in the Supplementary Planning Document.
4. Each design has the same aim, which is to provide headroom for a stair to a proposed loft conversion. The present staircase rises from the rear entry to the premises to arrive at a first floor landing, with a small bedroom built over the stair. The proposal is to place a new stair above the present one, starting in the former small bedroom and rising to the loft conversion. It is clear that without a roof extension of some form, there would be insufficient headroom between the new stair and the underside of the sloping roof. However, in the absence of a longitudinal section on the drawing through the stair, it is unclear

how the requirement for headroom has affected the height and location of the dormer and what alternatives might be available. It is not possible to be sure that it has been kept as small as possible, as sought in the Supplementary Planning Document.

5. As it is, the dormer on drawing 02B sits in the same location relative to the ridgeline as did that of the previous iterations. There would be no roof slope remaining above the flat roof of the dormer, it being dressed directly to the ridge, or just under it. The Supplementary Planning Document makes clear the need for dormers to be kept well off the sides, ridge and eaves of the roof. That does not occur in this case. There has clearly been some discussion over the other aspects of the dormer design, but that shown on drawing 02B appears an acceptable arrangement with regard to the eaves and sides, and the lack of alignment with the present rear addition is a minor matter which does not adversely affect the appearance of the building.
6. The failing identified above would be clearly seen in public views along Boundary Road and to the rear, and although there is some variety along the rear of this terrace and the adjoining taller one, the roof slopes are at present clear of additions on the three lower dwellings. The surroundings to the rear are somewhat degraded by commercial uses and the former gasworks, but the prominence of the rear of the terrace, with this being the end dwelling, means that harm would be caused to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policies CP12 and QD14, and the proposal does not reach the standard sought in SPD12.
7. The appellant makes reference to an appeal in a different part of the city, where a dormer was allowed (Ref APP/Q1445/D/15/3139064, dated 14 March 2017). Each Decision is taken on the circumstances of the case, and it is seldom possible to make direct comparisons. In that other case it is clear that the Inspector was looking at an area with much previous change; *'I saw at my site visit that a large number of properties in the vicinity of the appeal site have seen alterations to their roofs through the conversion of hipped ends to gables, front dormers and side dormers, and other roof alterations'*. The present case has been considered in relation to the surroundings as seen and the position of the dormer on the roof.
8. The appellant also points to the need for the additional accommodation in order to foster children with the City Council. However, personal circumstances such as that, beneficial as they no doubt would be, do not weigh heavily in consideration of planning permission for permanent structures which could be in place long after that requirement and these occupiers have changed. The harm is not outweighed by these stated benefits of the scheme. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

S J Papworth

INSPECTOR