



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2013

by **S Holden BSc MSc CEng TPP MRTPI FCIHT**

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

Decision date: 18 November 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/13/2206339

34 Lustrells Vale, Saltdean, Brighton, BN2 8FE

- 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 I Still against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/01963 was refused by notice dated 23 August 2013.
 - The development proposed is part two storey, part single storey rear extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. Lustrells Vale runs in north-west to south-easterly direction, joining Bishopstone Drive to the north and Lustrells Crescent to the south-east. However, the north point on the location plan submitted with the application appeared to be incorrect. I have therefore used the Council's references to the orientation of the existing dwelling, as I am satisfied that these are correct.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

4. Lustrells Vale is characterised by detached chalet bungalows with two uniform roof designs. The first type, of which No 34 is one, has a steeply pitched roof with full gable ends, whereas the second type, of which its neighbour at No 36 is one, has half-hipped gable ends. Both types have accommodation at first floor level served by front facing, flat-roofed dormer windows.
5. No 34 currently also has a conservatory at the rear and an attached single storey garage on the elevation facing No 36. The proposal is to replace the existing conservatory with a part single-storey part two-storey rear extension. The single-storey element would be to the rear of the garage whilst the two-storey element would span the existing dwelling but be set in from the northern flank wall by approximately 0.5m, whilst being flush with the southern elevation. It would have a steeply sloping roof at right angles to that of the host property and include a barn-style hipped end.

6. This proposal is a revised scheme following the dismissal of an appeal relating to a larger extension, Ref: APP/Q1445/D/12/2185749. In coming to her conclusions on that scheme my colleague considered that the depth of the proposed extension, at 3 metres, would not be disproportionate when compared with the existing dwelling. Her concerns related firstly, to the overall size and design of the extension, which included an incongruous central flat roof and secondly, to the visibility of the flank elevations of the extension from the wider street scene.
7. The current proposal has sought to address both these matters. However, the combination of the proposed width and depth of the two-storey element gives rise to the need for a large, tall and bulky roof. It would take the form of a half-hipped gable with its eaves some 0.7m below those of the existing dwelling, but its ridge would be only 0.3m below that of the existing dwelling. The proposal would therefore not appear subordinate to the host property because, in addition to its overall bulk, its ridge would be insufficiently below that of the main house. Consequently, the proposal would dominate and overwhelm the original form of this modest chalet bungalow. I accept that the flank walls of the proposal would not be seen from the public realm. However, the depth and height of the extension, with its large tiled roof, would be visible from neighbouring gardens from where it would appear bulky and incongruous.
8. In addition, there would be an awkward juxtaposition between the two-storey element and the single-storey extension to the rear of the garage. The existing rear elevation of the garage is flush with that of the host dwelling. However, its flat roof is significantly below the eaves. Therefore, in order to link the single-storey element to the rest of the proposed extension it would need to be 0.8m taller than the existing garage. Not only would this add to the domination of the rear elevation by the proposal, but the additional height would also be visible from the street in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. I consider this would appear odd, even though in longer views the proposed flat roof would be obscured by the bulk of the host property and its immediate neighbours. These factors add to my concerns about the overall width, height and bulk of the proposal and demonstrate that the proposal as a whole would be out of proportion with the original dwelling.
9. The Council has recently adopted a Supplementary Planning Document: *Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations*, June 2013, which advises that extensions should not dominate or detract from the original building, but play a subordinate 'supporting role' that respects the design, scale and proportions of the original building. For the reasons set out above I consider that the proposal would be contrary to this advice and would be too large and bulky to be successfully integrated into the existing building.
10. I note that the Council does not have details of any planning history for the substantial two-storey rear extension on the adjoining property, No 36. However, its roof reflects the proportions and eaves level of the host property and it does not occupy the full width of the original dwelling. I appreciate that the presence of this extension has caused the appellant to believe that a scheme of the scale proposed could be acceptable for his property. However, I consider the appeal scheme is significantly different and cannot be directly compared with what has been constructed at No 36. In any event my role is to consider the proposal afresh on its individual planning merits in the light of current planning policies.

11. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the proposed extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property. It would fail to comply with saved Policies QD1 and QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan, which requires development to be well designed and detailed in respect of the host dwelling and adjoining properties.
12. I appreciate that the current proposal has addressed some of the concerns identified with the previous scheme. Its reduced size and different roof form would ensure that it would not be harmful to the wider street scene and there would be no adverse effects for occupants of the adjoining properties. However, these positive factors do not diminish the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the host property.
13. I also understand that the family would prefer to extend their existing home rather than move house. However, these personal needs are likely to be short term when compared with the life of the dwelling. They are therefore insufficient to set aside harm to the character and appearance of the building. Having considered these, and all other relevant matters raised, I find nothing to alter my conclusion that the appeal should be dismissed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR