
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 November 2013

by Chris Preston BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 November 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/13/2206864
73 Balsdean Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 6PG

- 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 Richard Smith against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH/2013/02480, dated 16 July 2013, was refused by notice dated 17 September 2013.
 - The development proposed is: Single storey infill extension to front elevation with pitched roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Balsdean Road is a linear residential street which gradually rises up across an elevated hillside. The dwellings on the northern side of the carriageway are situated at a higher level than the road and those to the south set down below it. In common with a number of surrounding dwellings No 73 is a bungalow but has a basement garage and driveway which is cut into the hillside.
4. Although the individual appearance of dwellings along the street is varied, the building form is relatively consistent, particularly on the northern side of the road in the vicinity of the appeal site. Almost without exception, the dwellings within the immediate area are set out on an L-shaped floorplan, with a front gable projecting beyond the main body of the house. No 73 conforms to this pattern.
5. As one rises up the road, these projecting gables are the dominant feature, breaking up the mass of building and providing a regular rhythm and spacing between the dwellings. This rhythm forms an essential element in the character of the road. The impact of the front gables is heightened by the sloping nature of the street, with each dwelling stepping up in height relative to its neighbour.

6. The proposed development would relate poorly to this established pattern by removing the L-shaped floorplan and creating a comparatively wide and unbroken façade across the frontage of the dwelling. This would substantially erode the feeling of space between the dwelling and the neighbouring property at no 71.
7. Although the physical gap between the buildings would be unaltered, the proposal would remove the staggered effect created by the projecting bay. As described above, the projecting bays are a critical element in the design of the street, creating a varied building line. In contrast, the proposal would result in a solid mass of walling across the site frontage significantly eroding the feeling of space between the two dwellings. As a consequence, the resultant dwelling would have a negative effect upon the established rhythm of the street, appearing as a dominant and incongruous feature.
8. Although I note that the proposed materials would match the existing building, the resulting roof form of the dwelling, with two front gables and a valley gutter in-between would appear complex and out of kilter with the more simple arrangement seen on adjacent properties.
9. In view of the above, I consider that the proposal would cause harm to the established character of the surrounding area and, in this respect, would be contrary to policies QD2 and QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan (2005).

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

Chris Preston

INSPECTOR