



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 February 2015

by **Timothy C King BA(Hons) MRTPI**

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

Decision date: 11 March 2015

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### Appeal Ref: **APP/Q1445/D/15/3002193**

### **31 Westfield Avenue North, Saltdean, Brighton, BN2 8HS**

- 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 & Mrs Gant against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
  - The application Ref BH2014/02962, dated 2 September 2014, was refused by notice dated 20 October 2014.
  - The development proposed is '*Single storey front and rear extensions.*'
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### Decision

1. For the reasons that follow I dismiss the appeal insofar as it relates to the single storey front extension. I allow the appeal, however, insofar as it relates to the remainder of the application and grant planning permission for a single storey rear extension at 31 Westfield Avenue North, Saltdean, Brighton, BN2 8HS in accordance with the terms of the application Ref BH2014/02962, dated 2 September 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: Drawing Nos 14-1214-01, 14-1214-02, Block Plan and Site Location Plan.
  - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

### Main Issue

2. The Council raises no objections to the proposed single storey rear extension and I see no reason to disagree with this approach. In the circumstances, I will base my decision on the merits of the proposed front addition. Accordingly, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### Reasons

3. The appeal property is a bungalow sited off a quiet residential street. The dwelling is typical of the immediate vernacular, characterised by small detached bungalows of a common design. Typical such features include hipped
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roof arrangements, shallow half-frontage projections incorporating a small porch and a short, truncated roof ridge rather than it rising to a pyramidal point. Although some of the dwellings have been modified to varying degrees the latter feature, amongst the style of bungalows mentioned, appears to remain largely inviolate. Further, although the land slopes up towards the east the bungalows are of common height and, with regard to Nos 29-35, have a roughly comparable front building line. All these factors provide for a general feel of uniformity.

4. The proposed front extension would involve bringing forward the main frontage by some 1.125m, with an additional half-width porch projection to a similar depth, thereby replicating the existing arrangement. The proposal would also involve raising the height of the roof by some 0.5m which would effectively dispense with the characteristic flat-roofed feature.
5. Policy QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan (LP), which stresses the importance of residential extensions relating well to neighbouring properties and the surrounding area is taken further by the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 12 'Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations' (SPD).
6. The latter document indicates that the original design of the building, its setting and general character should be the primary influence on the design of any extension or alteration. To this end they should play a subordinate role respectful of the design, scale and proportions of the host building whilst having regard to the existing building and roof lines and the form and design thereof.
7. Whilst I consider that the front extension and heightened roof might represent an acceptable form of development in a different setting, given the particular circumstances I have mentioned, certain implications in terms of the bungalow's physical appearance would arise from the proposal which would impact on the neighbouring visual rhythm.
8. In this regard I conclude that the bungalow's original design and its relationship with the neighbouring properties would be harmed which would, in turn, be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Further, the proposal would conflict with the objectives of LP Policy QD14 and relevant advice contained within the SPD.
9. The appellants, somewhat aggrieved at the decision, indicates that, despite approaches made to discuss the proposal, Council officials failed to make contact or enter into a dialogue in this regard. However, even were this to be the case, there is no indication that the Council's decision would have been different.
10. Those elements of the proposed alterations that I have found to be unacceptable are severable from the remainder of the proposal. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should succeed in relation to the single storey rear extension. However, in relation to the single storey front extension, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.
11. As regards conditions, I am imposing one relating to the statutory time limit and a requirement for the use of matching materials to ensure a satisfactory appearance. Also, for the avoidance of doubt, and in the interests of good

planning, I have imposed a condition which requires that the development be built in accordance with the approved plans.

*Timothy C King*

INSPECTOR

