



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 March 2015

by **Ray Wright** BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 March 2015

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/14/2224183 328 Cowley Drive, Brighton BN2 6TP

- 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 David Sawyer against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2014/01602 was refused by notice dated 17 July 2014.
 - The development proposed is 'loft conversion with dormers front and rear and to raise roof over existing front addition.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for an extension at first floor level to front gable, barn end to gable roof alterations and 2 no. dormers to front roofslope to facilitate loft conversion at 328 Cowley Drive, Brighton, BN2 6TP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref BH2014/01602, dated 16 May 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: 01, A102, and A104.
 - 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.

Procedural Matter

2. The description within the application form is as set out in the heading above. However, the drawings submitted with the application clearly show only two dormers to the *front* of the dwelling. I have considered this appeal on the basis of the drawings submitted and used the more accurate description within the appellant's appeal form, which corresponds with that in the Council's decision letter.

Main issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposals on the appearance of the host property and the wider effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The application relates to a detached bungalow on the north side of Cowley Drive. The application proposes alterations to the roof to provide accommodation at first floor level.
5. The Council raises no objection to the proposed alteration of the current 'barn ends' of the roof of the appeal property to full gables. The alteration would have only a limited impact on the appearance of the property and I have no reason to disagree with this assessment.
6. The proposals would involve the installation of two dormer windows to the front roof slope. The Council's 'spd 12 - design guide for extensions and alterations' (SPD) indicates that front dormers will generally be resisted where they unbalance a building or disrupt the continuity of a terrace or group. However, while the property is within a group of bungalows on this side of the road, each with similar plot widths, the actual buildings are not uniform: the appeal property having a different roof form to its immediate neighbours. In addition, the wider area has a mix of residential properties many of which appear to have been altered and extended since their original construction.
7. A number of properties in the vicinity have dormer additions, with a large box dormer evident on a property directly opposite the appeal site. In this case the dormers, as proposed, would meet the detailed requirements set out in the SPD, in that they would be set up from the eaves lines, down from the ridge and in from the sides of the bungalow, with a hipped roof design. Consequently, they would be subordinate within the overall roof space and, to my mind, not be visually dominant or strident.
8. Similarly, there are a number of gable features to the residential properties in the area, including a gable to the front of the immediately adjoining bungalow. Therefore the proposed alteration of a front hip roof to a gable, in this scheme, would not be a discordant feature in the wider area.
9. I conclude that the development would not be materially harmful to the character and appearance of the property or wider area. As such there would be no conflict with the design requirements of the Framework, Policies QD1, QD2, and QD14 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005 or SPD.

Conditions

10. The Council has not put forward any conditions should the appeal succeed. However, the standard commencement condition is required, as is a condition referring to the relevant plans, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. To fully integrate the alterations with the existing bungalow, it is important that suitable matching external finishes are used. Therefore, a condition requiring proposed external materials to match the existing is reasonable and necessary.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Ray Wright

INSPECTOR