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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 January 2016

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

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

Decision date: 28 January 2016

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### Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/15/3134185

### 5 Buxted Rise, Brighton BN1 8FG

- 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 Greenow against the decision of Brighton and Hove City Council.
  - The application Ref BH2015/01021, dated 23 March 2015, was refused by notice dated 20 August 2015.
  - The development proposed is rear and side extensions.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extensions on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

### Reasons

3. Buxted Rise is characterised by pairs of semi-detached two-storey dwellings. They are arranged in groups with similar design characteristics, one of which is attached garages with flat roofs. These properties also have front entrances in what is described as a hallway extension that connects the house to the garage. In the case of No 5 this hallway runs the full depth of the house and projects into the rear garden. This single-storey rear projection also includes a toilet and store sited to the rear of the garage.
  4. The proposal seeks to replace the garage and the existing single-storey projection with a single-storey side and rear extension. It would be flush with the front elevation and wrap around the remainder of the ground floor. At the front it would be 4.4m wide and it would project just over 3m from the existing rear elevation. The extension would have a combined flat and hipped roof.
  5. Towards the front of the site the proposed extension would occupy a similar footprint to that of the existing garage. However, its different roof form would fundamentally change its appearance. It would therefore fail to respect or complement the shape or style of the main dwelling. The existing garage is clearly a subservient form of building. By contrast the proposed extension would be seen as an addition to the house that incorporated living space. In
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this context it would appear to be excessive in width and out of proportion with the host dwelling. The changed roof form would accentuate this increase in size, significantly adding to the overall bulk of the proposal. The lack of set-back from the front elevation would further highlight the disproportionate size of the proposal.

6. At the rear of the property the wrap around extension would result in a doubling of the overall footprint of the house. This combination of rear and side extensions of the scale proposed would result in it dominating the rear of the house. Its shape and siting would not enable it to integrate satisfactorily with the form and proportions of the main dwelling. The large expanse of flat roof and long sections of tiled hipped roof would heighten this incongruous appearance and would not, in my view, represent good design.
7. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document: *Design Guide for Extensions and Alterations* (SPD12) states that as a general rule extensions should play a subordinate 'supporting role' that respects the design, scale and proportions of the host building. It advises that single-storey side extensions should normally be no wider than half the frontage width of the host property and should be set back from the front of the building by at least 0.5m. It goes on to provide guidance about roof forms that are likely to be acceptable. The appeal proposal does not accord with these requirements.
8. On my site visit I saw that some nearby properties had converted their garages into living accommodation. Although I do not have details of when these changes took place or how the Council assessed them, I saw that these alterations had retained flat roofs. The appellant has also referred to other schemes in the vicinity that the Council has permitted. However, I have no information that would enable me to make meaningful comparisons with the appeal proposal. In any event my role in this matter is to determine the appeal on its individual merits in the light of current planning policy.
9. I conclude that the proposed extension would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area. It would therefore be contrary to saved Policies QD2 and QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan, which seeks high quality design that respects its setting and takes account of the height, scale, bulk and design of existing buildings. It would also fail to take account of the advice of SPD12.
10. For this reason, and having regard to all other relevant matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Sheila Holden*

INSPECTOR