



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 September 2008

by **J O Head** BSc(Econ) DipTP MRTPI

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

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Decision date:
9 October 2008

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/A/08/2074455

114 Eldred Avenue, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 5EH

- 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 G Firth & Miss J Ward against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
- The application Ref BH2008/00081, dated 2 January 2008, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2008.
- The development proposed is described as a loft conversion including hip to gable roof extension, rear dormer with Juliet balcony and front rooflight.

Decision

1. **I dismiss the appeal.**

Main issue

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposed development on the appearance of the building and on the street scene in Eldred Avenue.

Reasons

3. No 114 is part of a group of semi-detached houses in a hillside location on the east side of Eldred Avenue. The houses in the pairs have staggered frontages and are not identical, but nevertheless share common design features such as hipped and tiled roofs. This uniformity creates a soft roofscape stepping regularly down the slope when viewed from the north. The gable end that has been added to No 126, some distance to the north, upsets the rhythm of the hipped-roofed development on this side of the road and is a particularly prominent feature from the south, giving a harder appearance to the street scene. The Council says that planning permission has not been granted for the alteration of the roof at No 126. I consider that it represents a poor quality of design that should not be seen as a precedent for other alterations to hipped roofs in this part of the street.
4. Policies QD2 and QD14 of the Brighton & Hove Local Plan and supporting Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) *Roof Alterations and Extensions* seek a high standard of design in relation to the property to be extended, adjoining properties and the surrounding area. The SPG advises that roof extensions altering the basic shape of the roof, eg from a hipped to a gable end, will be

unacceptable because of the imbalance created between the semi-detached pair and the visually heavy roof that would result.

5. Although Nos 114 and 116 are not identical in appearance, they are part of a building designed as a whole. The proposed conversion from a hip to a gable would conflict with that design, as would the bulky flat-roofed dormer that would cover much of the rear roof slope. Both alterations would be in clear conflict with the advice in the SPG and would be jarring elements that would unbalance the appearance of the pair of houses. The gable and the flat roof of the dormer would be visible between Nos 114 and 112 as visually heavy and incongruous features in a part of the street that is otherwise generally free from harmful roof alterations. The whole of the dormer would be visible from properties and gardens to the rear. The proposal would not represent the high standard of design sought by development plan policy or by Government policy as set out in Planning Policy Statement 1 *Delivering Sustainable Development*, which advises that design which is inappropriate in its context should not be accepted.
6. I understand the appellants' wish for additional family accommodation and the submission that similar alterations might be possible elsewhere as 'permitted development'. I have dealt with this proposal on its own merits, having regard to prevailing development plan policies and advice. The matters raised do not alter my conclusion that the proposed development would harm both the appearance of the host building and the street scene in this part of Eldred Avenue, in conflict with Local Plan policy and design advice. It would be inappropriate in its context and is, accordingly, unacceptable.

John Head

INSPECTOR