

## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2016

**by Cullum J A Parker BA(Hons) MA MRTPI IHBC**

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

**Decision date: 18 August 2016**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/D/16/3150994**

**22 Newark Place, Brighton, Brighton and Hove, BN2 9NT**

- 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 Mrs Nancy Howard against the decision of Brighton & Hove City Council.
  - The application Ref BH2016/00741, dated 29 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 April 2016.
  - The development proposed is loft conversion with rear dormer, including raising ridge height to provide adequate headroom internally.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the street scene.

### Reasons

3. The appeal site is part of a long row of terraced properties roughly running on a north-east to south-westerly axis. The street scene nearest the appeal site is characterised by two-bay wide houses with a short pavement to their front. I saw during my site visit that there are views of the roof form along the terrace when viewed from the highway. It is clear to see that there are some party wall ridges along the terrace roof scape and some of the roofs are slightly higher than that at No 22, whereas others, including that at No 22a, matches the height and form.
4. I was able to see that there are some dormers within the wider street scene. However, these are typically either set in from the eaves and/or ridges, or at an oblique angle that means that they are not viewed straight-on. It is unclear as to which of these may (or may not) benefit from permitted development rights or planning permission approved before the adoption of the local development plan. Nonetheless, they provide part of the overall context of the street scene in which the appeal site lies within.
5. The Council's concerns over the appeal scheme can be divided into two main areas; the raising of the ridge height and the rear dormer. Turning to the first matter, the ridge would be raised so that it projects higher than the roofs at both Nos 22a and Nos 20/21. Visually this would look odd within the street scene. With the exception of the roof at No 19 (which is slightly higher than

that at Nos 20/21), the general trend is for the roofs to reduce in relative height from highest part at the Southover Street end to a lower visual height at the Albion Hill end of Newark Place. This visual reduction or stepping down in roof heights is due in part to the fact that Newark Place slopes down to the south west end. What this means in practice is that the higher ridge height proposed at No 22, which is not subtle in height and would require a much steeper pitch, would look an odd and incongruent feature within its immediate context and when viewed within the wider street scene.

6. In terms of the rear dormer, this would be incorporated within the raised ridge. However, when looking at drawings PBP0454/01 and the sections it is unclear as to why on the drawings entitled 'proposed section', showing the 2 metre internal height, there is a discrepancy when compared to the 'proposed south west elevation' and the 'proposed north east elevation' drawings. Put another way, the flat roof proposed on the first drawing meets the ridge, whereas on the second and third drawings it is set lower.
7. Setting aside the inconsistencies within the drawings themselves, it is clear that the 'proposed rear elevation' drawing shows a large box dormer that would span across the entire rear roof slope of the building. In practice, this would result in an extension that would appear as a second floor addition to the rear of the property rather than a dormer window. This would be at odds with the prevailing pattern of development within the area, where rear dormers are generally set in within the side and eaves, or their detailed planning history is unknown.
8. I note the appellant's view in that they consider the proposal to represent a 'sustainable development'. However, the proposal would have a materially harmful impact on the built environment and would not be able to achieve this part of the three mutually dependent roles of sustainable development; social, economic, and environmental. Nor would the social and economic benefits suggested in this case outweigh the environmental harm identified.
9. I therefore conclude that the combination of the incongruent raising of the ridge height and the large flat roof rear extension at second floor level results in a proposal that would lead to material harm to the character and appearance of the street scene. It would therefore be contrary to Policy DQ14 of the *Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005*, as supported by the *Design guide for extensions and alterations SPD 12* (adopted 2013), which amongst other aims seeks to ensure that proposals for extensions and alterations will only be granted if the proposed development is well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the property to be extended, adjoining properties and the surrounding area.
10. For the reasons given above, and having taken into account all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Cullum J A Parker*

INSPECTOR