Application Number: ADC/0545/07 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 36 Firle Road, Lancing BN15 0NZ

Proposal: Front dormer (retrospective-has been built higher than approved under ADC/0186/07)

The Application

The application retrospectively seeks approval of an amendment to the previous permission (ADC/0186/07) for rooms in the roof. These involved adding a part-hipped side gable and front & rear dormers onto this semi-detached bungalow situated on rising ground on the north side of the road.

As approved, the front dormer was shown 4.5m wide and 1.75m high, with a flat roof projecting out from the pitched roof by 2.1m. As built, it measures 4.5m wide and 2.2m high, the flat roof projecting by 2.5m

The application is accompanied by some notes which state that it was always intended by the applicant to copy the design of the dormer at No.32 and this was accepted by a planning officer at the time of preliminary enquiries. There was never any intention to deceive but it was not appreciated in replicating the approved plans for No.32 that they did not show what had actually been built. The builder has verbally stated that the reason for the discrepancy was because it was necessary to have a higher internal ceiling height and also desirable that the external height matched that of the existing smaller front dormer of the attached bungalow.

Consultations and Representations

Lancing Parish Council: To be reported.

Third Parties: To be reported. £ letters of support have been received from No's 27 & 30 Firle Road and 67 Lynchmere Ave. They state that the loft conversion has improved the bungalow for this young family without adversely affecting the neighbourhood.
The applicant has also submitted copies of letters of support from No's 26, 28 & 32 Firle Road stating that they disagree with the complaint that was made about the development and that in their view it is not out of keeping in this area of varied and non-uniform designs and is neat and well-constructed.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005): LOC1, DEV1,
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996): AG1, AH7 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' including:- .
Dev Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'

PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policies seek to protect and, where possible enhance the character and distinctiveness of areas, requiring high standards of design that have regard to local context (DEV1).

Government policy is set out in Planning Policy Statement PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'. Relevant paragraphs are 17, which refers to the commitment to protecting and improving the environment; 18 which states that planning should seek to maintain and improve the local environment and help to mitigate the effects of declining environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as design; and 34 which states that good design is indivisible from good planning and that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, should not be accepted.

Policy AH7 of the Local Plan, relating specifically to extensions and alterations to dwellings, states that they should be designed so that "their design and materials are sympathetic to both the original dwelling and the area in general."

Supplementary Planning Guidance in DC Standard No. 3 'Extension and Alteration to Dwellings' states that:-

> "Dormers should not be so large that they overdominate the dwelling, resulting in a top-heavy 'box-like' appearance. They should be kept well below the ridge level of the existing roof and should not project as far as the walls....a large amount of the original roof should still be clearly visible."

Visual amenity – appearance and character

Although the dimensional discrepancy of approximately 0.4m in height and depth might not seem great, it increases the volume of the dormer from 8.3 cubic metres to 11.9 cubic metres, a 43% increase. The front dormer, as built, appears significantly larger than that shown on the approved plans. Owing to the fact that the bungalow is situated well above road level, it has a greater visual impact than would otherwise have been the case.

However, there is a wide assortment of other dormers in this road and in the locality generally, the applicants submitting photographs of these to prove their point. The plans for No.36 that were permitted (ADC/0186/07) showed a wider dormer of lower overall height than that which exists on No.34, the attached bungalow, consequently it would not have matched up in any event. The applicants state that they copied the height and projection of the dormer

at nearby No.32, although it has now come to light that this dormer was built larger than had been permitted (L/94/87).

The dormer is larger than would normally be considered acceptable at the front. However, it is a sufficient distance below the ridge (0.6m) and leaves sufficient roof tiling either side (1.5m). In this particular instance, account needs to be taken of the other existing large dormers and also that the size and height that was permitted did not match the dormer of the attached bungalow.

On balance, it is considered that the degree of harm to the appearance of the locality does not warrant refusal in the circumstances of this case.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

In the circumstances of this case, the dormer as built, as compared to the dormer originally permitted, does not detract from the existing local environment to a significant degree and does not result in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. On balance, it is not considered to conflict materially with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7) and the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (LOC1, DEV1).

Subject to:-

No conditions