Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 May 2025

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3805/D/25/3363164
121 Slonk Hill Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 6HY.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Alex Wooding against the decision of Adur District Council.
- The application Ref is AWDM/1542/24.
- The development proposed is described as raising of roof ridge to create first floor (re-submission of AWDM/1251/24).

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on the architectural integrity of the dwelling and thereby the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, 121 Slonk Hill Road (No 121), is a detached bungalow, set back from the road behind an open front garden on the south side of the road. Due to the topography of the development the ground floor of No 121 is positioned below road level.

4. No 121 is one of some 42 bungalows in a row of virtually identical dwellings in both design and three-dimensional form. The eaves line and ridge heights of the properties only vary marginally between one property and another, to reflect minor changes in ground level.

5. Save for the introduction of front and side porch structures to a few of the dwellings on the south side of the road there have been no substantive alterations to these bungalow's three-dimensional form, roof line or overall height when viewed from the road. Without the denser tree line or taller building to the south, as found elsewhere on the north side of the road, the roof line and in particular their regular uniform gable roof form is clearly silhouetted against the skyline.

6. The appellant proposes adding a second storey to form a master suite and snug at first floor level. The overall ridge and eaves height of the existing bungalow would be raised by about 1.7 metres.

7. Policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan 2017 (LP) requires, along with other things, development to be of a high architectural quality that respects and enhances the character of the site, and prevailing character of the area, in terms of proportion, form, context, massing, siting, layout, density, height, size, scale, materials, detailed design features and landscaping. It further requires it to make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area.

8. In addition, the Council's Development Management Standard No. 2 Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings (DMS) advises that amongst other things the most important basic principle is that any extension should be in keeping with the appearance, scale, design and character of both the existing dwelling and the street scene generally.

9. Proportionately, due to primarily the increase height and spacing and size the retained ground floor windows in the side elevations the additional storey would appear as a top heavy, utilitarian, uncomfortable and visually intrusive form of development here to the detriment of the architectural integrity of No 121.

10. Further, the increase in height, choice of cladding, fenestration and detailing more generally would render the dwelling as extended very prominent in the street scene. Such that overall, the development would contrast with and not serve to reflect the prevailing character of the street scene or wider development.

11. I conclude in respect of the main issue that the proposal would not be of a high architectural quality. The extension would therefore in turn be harmful to the architectural integrity of the dwelling and thereby the character and appearance of the street scene. To allow the development would be contrary to the objectives of LP Policy 15 and DMS No 2 as set out above.

Other matters

12. I am sympathetic to the appellant's requirement for additional accommodation to house his growing family. However, the provision of enhanced living accommodation, as proposed here, is a private benefit which does not weigh in favour of the appeal.

13. Further, I appreciate that he proposed addition would add in a small way to the stock of larger properties in the Adur District. However, it would not add to the overall housing stock locally. I therefore attach little weight to this benefit.

14. I note that the current design is a re-submission of a previous proposal altered to address the Council's earlier concerns. However, the revised design, including the lower roof height would not meet the aims of the Council's policy objectives in terms of either the quality of design or the developments impact on the character and appearance of the area.

15. The introduction of privacy glass to the rear of the extension would reduce any adverse impact on the living conditions of neighbouring residents from overlooking. In addition, I see form the evidence that no objections have been raised by consultees to the proposal, and further some five local residents have positively supported the scheme. However, these considerations do not render the scheme acceptable nor overcome that harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the street scene if the development were to go ahead. I can therefore afford them only very limited weight in the planning balance.

16. I consider the design and proportions of the proposed first floor windows to the front of the proposed extension acceptable on design grounds. However, this detail alone does not overcome the harm I have found if the overall development were to go ahead as designed.

Conclusions

17. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR