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/25/3363168
28 Wembley Avenue, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 9JZ.

- 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 Paul Ellis against the decision of Adur District Council.
- The application Ref is AWDM/0122/25.
- The development proposed is a front dormer to an existing loft conversion.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the street scene and the wider area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, 28 Wembley Avenue (No28) is a mid-terrace two-storey dwelling, with loft space accommodation. The residential development in the road comprises primarily long blocks of eight terrace houses. In addition to the terraces there is an eclectic mix of other forms of residential development at either end of the road.

4. The appellant proposes a new dormer in the street facing roof slope to improve access and headroom within the existing loft space bedroom.

5. The Council's Development Management Standard No. 2 Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings (DMS) advises that amongst other things front dormers may not be acceptable if there are no other front dormers present in a particular street.

6. Further, it states that roof extensions should respect the scale, character and appearance of existing dwellings, dormers should not be so large that they over-dominate the dwelling, resulting in a 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 of the house, and a large amount of the original roof should still be clearly visible.

7. As I observed a number of the houses in the avenue have roof space conversions. However, only two have front dormers. However, neither of these are in houses

within any of the terraces on the same side of the road as No 28. The roof scape of this and the adjoining terraces therefore remained virtually mainly unaltered. The introduction of a dormer here, in an otherwise unaltered terrace roof would appear as an incongruous alien addition that would be detriment to the visual amenity of the terrace and the street scene.

8. In addition, the appellant proposes a large flat roof box dormer that would be built virtually across the full width of the house and would extend from just above the eaves line to just under the ridge of the roof. The proposed dormer would therefore visually subsume and dominate the front roof slope.

9. For the foregoing reasons the proposed dormer would cause significant visual harm to the host property, the terrace and the wider street scene. To allow it would be contrary to the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan 2017 and the Council's DMS as the relate to, amongst other things the quality of development and the requirement for it to respect and enhance the prevailing character and appearance of the area.

Other Matters

10. The provision of enhanced living accommodation, as proposed here, is a private benefit which does not weigh in favour of the appeal. I therefore attach little weight to this benefit.

11. I appreciate that the building work would be carried out using energy efficient materials and the dormer would be finished in matching traditional materials. However, these considerations do not outweigh the harm that I have identified if the development were to proceed.

12. I acknowledge that, due to its location, the dormer would not have any adverse impact on the living conditions of any neighbouring residents and no objections have been raised by consultees to the proposal. Further, I note that neither the terrace nor the area have been identified as having any particular heritage status. However, these considerations do not render the scheme acceptable nor overcome the 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 these matters only very limited weight in the planning balance.

13. I note that in addition to the terraces of which No 28 is part there is a more eclectic mix of other forms of residential development some of which have dormers elsewhere in the road. Nevertheless, I do not consider these are material to my consideration of the proposed alterations to this house in this particular location.

Conclusions

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

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR