The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2020

by Victor Callister BA(Hons) PGC(Oxon) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3805/D/20/3254531
33 Grinstead Lane, Lancing BN15 9DU

- 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 Ross MacKenzie against the decision of Adur District Council.
- The application Ref AWDM/0218/20, dated 6 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 March 2020.
- The development proposed is a loft conversion.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue of this appeal is the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the local area

Reasons

3. 33 Grinstead Lane is a 2 storey house detached house with a hipped and gabled roof, located in part of a long and wide street made up of a variety of detached and semi-detached bungalows, some with roof extensions and with occasional 2 storey houses all set back behind good sized front gardens. It is neighboured to both sides and opposite by bungalows, within which setting its 2 storey with gable end roof presents a scale and form that makes it a substantial and prominent feature within the street scene of the local area.

4. The proposal would extend the roof of the 2 storey part of the host dwelling with dormer extensions to nearly the full height, length and width of both side roof slopes, with windows in both the front and rear faces of the proposed dormers and front gable end. The scale and massing of the pair of dormer extensions would have the effect of fundamentally altering its existing character and appearance, resulting in a box like top heavy appearance that would dominate and not be subsidiary to the host dwelling.

5. Due to its bulk and excessive scale in relation to an already prominent host dwelling, the proposed extension would be very apparent in views of the property from both the public and private realm in the local area. In these views the proposal would, due to its excessive scale and box like roof form appear disproportionate and overly dominant, therefore, resulting in it being incongruous and out of keeping with the context of the smaller scale properties that provide its immediate setting.

6. The appellant has drawn my attention to other properties in the local and wider area with roof extensions and potential developments that would replace bungalows with houses. In some instances, these examples show significant extensions to bungalows and existing houses in similar form to that proposed. However, I find that although within a similar context of the host dwelling none of these examples of development, existing or approved, demonstrate a comparable impact on their host property or the street scene that would result from the scale and form of the proposed extension to an already prominent 2 storey house. I therefore give little weight to the appellant's argument that these examples serve as a precedent for the proposed extension and I have considered the proposal on its own merits.

7. The appellant has also drawn attention to the permitted development rights that the host dwelling has, in line with the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO). The appellant has shown that substantial dormer extensions could be constructed to both sides of the roof, albeit of smaller scale and with less floorspace than the proposed extensions. The appellant is of the view that the proposal would result in greater usable space, whilst having the same visual impact and therefore presents a preferable alternative to the type of development that would be possible through the implementation of the permitted development rights.

8. However, I find that, although the proposal would result in greater usable floorspace, the extensions permitted under the permitted development rights set out in the GPDO would cause proportionately lesser harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene of the local area. I find, therefore, that the benefit of greater floorspace does not outweigh the greater harm of the proposal I have identified above. As such, this is a matter of only limited weight in favour of the appeal scheme.

9. Consequently, the proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of both the host dwelling and that of the surrounding area and be contrary to Policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan, which seeks to ensure that development proposals are well designed and detailed in relation to the property to be extended and reflect and promote local distinctiveness. The proposal would not accord with Adur District Council's adopted Development Management Standard No 2 - Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings, in that it fails to respect the design of the host dwelling and would dominate the existing roof form. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure that development is visually attractive, adds to the quality of the area and is sympathetic to its character.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR