The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 February 2022

by H Miles BA(hons), MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 07 MARCH 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3805/D/21/3288551
74 Underdown Road, Southwick BN42 4HL

- 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 Simon Ritchie against the decision of Adur District Council.
- The application Ref AWDM/1546/21, dated 11 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 October 2021.
- The development proposed is a rear dormer.

Decision

1. This appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. There is another appeal for similar development on an adjoining site[1]. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined these appeals on their individual merits. Nonetheless, as there are clear parallels between the two cases, much of the language used is common to both of these decision letters.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area and on the living conditions of nearby occupiers with particular regard to any overbearing effect.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

4. Underdown Road is mainly characterised by semi-detached and short terraces of two-storey dwellings with pitched roofs. Some of the properties have been extended at roof level with dormers to the rear main roof slope. Many have two storey rear outriggers, albeit extensions above these are unusual and therefore do not form a notable part of the character of the area. There is some recent development to the north of the appeal site. The layout in this area differs. However, the two storey, pitched roof character of the built form broadly reflects that nearby. As such, although their detailing differs, the shared features of the nearby houses including their scale and form, result in a pleasant modest and consistent character in this area.

5. The host property is a two storey semi-detached house with a pitched roof to the front and a full width, full height dormer to the rear. Although the existing roof extension is somewhat large, it nevertheless remains subservient to the

[1] APP/Y3805/D/21/3288549

appearance of the host dwelling. The property also has a two storey, flat roofed outrigger at the rear with a single storey extension beyond. These features are typical of the surrounding area and consequently the host dwelling makes a positive contribution to the character of the surroundings.

6. The proposed development would introduce an additional floor, level with the ridge height, for the full length of the two storey rear outrigger. Although tile hung, the walls would extend directly upwards and therefore the extension would be seen as an additional storey. It would be a bulky addition in a prominent elevated position, would harmfully undermine the secondary nature of the outrigger and, in combination with the existing dormer, it would completely erode the original rear roof form. Consequently, it would be an inappropriately dominant extension which would be harmful to the character of the host dwelling and therefore the surrounding area.

7. Whilst the extension would not be seen from the street, it would be highly visible from a number of neighbouring properties and their gardens and consequently this harm would be experienced.

8. There is an appeal which relates to very similar development at the adjoining property. I have no mechanism to secure that these extensions would be implemented together. In any case, the increased scale and dominance of two adjoining extensions would not overcome the harm identified above.

9. As such, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, in this respect, it would be contrary to Policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan 2017 (LP) which requires development to respect and enhance the character of the site and the area, amongst other things.

Living Conditions

10. The proposed extension would be sited above and adjoining existing built form. Furthermore No 72 has a part single, part two storey rear addition and No 76 has a substantial single storey extension to the rear. The proposed development would not extend beyond these. Therefore, although it would be visible, particularly from the adjoining gardens, given the existing context it would not be so overbearing as to unacceptably effect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers.

11. Therefore the proposed development would not have an unacceptably harmful effect on the living conditions of nearby occupiers with particular regard to any overbearing effect. As such, in this respect, it would be in accordance with Policy 15 of the LP which, in part, requires that development should not have an unacceptable impact on adjacent properties.

Other Matters

12. The proposed development would provide a home office which would contribute to the housing mix in an accessible location, make the property more adaptable and provide for flexible working which would reduce the need to commute. The proposed development would also result in economic benefits during construction and would be built to current energy efficiency standards from materials sourced locally, with minimum waste during construction. However, given the size and nature of the proposed extension, even taken together, any benefits would be minimal in their scale. For the same reasons the scheme is

unlikely to result in a meaningful economic benefit in the local area once complete.

13. I do not find harm to living conditions. However, the lack of harm in this regard is a neutral factor. On the other hand, I have identified that there would be notable, permanent harm to the character and appearance of the area. As such these minimal benefits do not outweigh the considerable harm identified.

Conclusion

14. The proposal would not accord with the development plan and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, to indicate that the appeal should be determined otherwise. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

H Miles

INSPECTOR