



PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Planning Committee South
BY: Development Manager
DATE: 17 January 2017
DEVELOPMENT: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new dwelling
SITE: West Winds Brighton Road Woodmancote Henfield
WARD: Bramber, Upper Beeding and Woodmancote
APPLICATION: DC/16/2279
APPLICANT: Mr and Mrs Ross and Sharon Douglas

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: More than eight letters of representation contrary to the Officer's recommendation have been received

RECOMMENDATION: To refuse Planning Permission

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.2 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing dwelling and its replacement with a contemporary 5-bedroom two-storey dwelling. The existing triple bay garage to the north-west corner of the plot would be retained and the existing two vehicular entrances to the site would remain unaffected.
- 1.3 The proposal would have a cranked footprint at the rear, and with flat roofs throughout. The proposed front building line would be set forward of the existing building line and would be angled towards the front of the plot
- 1.4 The rear (south) elevation would be predominantly glass with a first-floor terrace / balcony running across the full width and around the south-western corner of the building. The front (north) elevation would exhibit a linear / horizontal appearance, with a defined break in materials between the ground and upper floor, a pronounced and overhanging eaves to the flat roof and angled rendered 'wings' to the ground floor front walls, along with horizontal framing to the glazing. External materials are to include stone, glass, render and timber cladding.
- 1.5 The proposed floor area is approximately 256sq.m (not including the retained and reduced annexe). The overall width of the new dwelling at ground floor, facing the street, would be

some 28m and with a flat roof height of some 7.3m. The overall widths take into account the cranked footprint and terraces. This width would be in addition to that of the retained annexe at 7.2m at ground floor.

- 1.6 The existing annexe to the east would be retained and its appearance updated to reflect the smooth and contemporary appearance of the proposed new dwelling. The following changes would be made: New flat roof (resulting in an overall height of 5.6m), new and re-sized window openings to all elevations, new rendered walls and the removal of the rear conservatory.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.7 The application site of 'West Winds' is located outside the built-up area of Woodmancote, set some 2km to the east of the village of Henfield. The site is located on the southern side of the A281 and benefits from two vehicular accesses.
- 1.8 The South Downs National Park lies approximately 750m to the south of the application site, and given the topography and intervening landforms, there are clear views from the rear of the house towards the hill crest of the South Downs.
- 1.9 The application site contains an extended two-storey Tudor-style 4-bedroom dwelling. To the east, and separated by a gap of some 3m, there is a smaller, detached two-storey annex with a long conservatory some 7.5m in length.
- 1.10 To the rear of both buildings is a large south-facing patio area and garden with scattered trees and shrubs. The front boundary is defined by tall screening hedges with dense conifers to the western section of boundary and a more open screening to the eastern section. Views of the property are afforded from the street through the two gated vehicular accesses and from the eastern section of boundary.
- 1.11 Adjoining properties are predominately detached two-storey dwellings. Some 80m to the east is a grade II listed building, Nutknowle Farm, separated by two intervening dwellings. Properties to the north of the site are set behind a tall and dense strip of planting and a further access road which runs parallel to the public highway. As a result, there is very limited visual interaction between the applicant property and the northern neighbours.
- 1.12 The application site benefits from an extant permission (DC/16/0494) granted in April 2016, for a substantial two-storey extension to the western side of the property, some 7m wide and 9.5m in depth. In addition, the approved extension created a two-storey link with the existing annexe across the eastern side of the dwelling, resulting in a full width property of some 28m at first-floor, and a stepped but continual roofline.
- 1.13 It is important to note, that there is a large Copper Beech tree which is located to the front of the existing dwelling and that, given the size and prominence of this tree, an Emergency Tree Preservation Order was served on the Copper Beech, dated 1st December 2016.
- 1.14 The site is located in area D2 of the Landscape Character Assessment 2003 (Henfield and Small Dole Farmlands). Long views over undulating landscape is noted as one of the Key Characteristics of the area with a mix of localised building materials including flint, brick and sandstone.
- 1.15 One of the key sensitivities identified includes the cumulative impact of small scale incremental changes, eg suburbanisation. The high visibility of the area also contributes to the overall sensitivity to change.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICY

2.2 **National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

- NPPF1 - Building a strong, competitive economy
- NPPF6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- NPPF7 - Requiring good design
- NPPF11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICY

2.3 **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF 2015)**

- HDPF1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
- HDPF2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
- HDPF25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- HDPF26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
- HDPF28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
- HDPF32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
- HDPF33 - Development Principles
- HDPF35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
- HDPF36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
- HDPF37 - Sustainable Construction
- NPPF38 – Strategic Policy: Flooding
- HDPF40 - Sustainable Transport
- HDPF41 - Parking

RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.4 The Woodmandcote Parish Neighbourhood Plan (2016 – 2031) has recently been through the public consultation stage, ending 21st October 2016. The Plan has not yet been submitted for Examination.

PLANNING HISTORY

WK/21/99	Replacement dwelling	REF
WK/8/00	Extension to existing dwelling	PER
DC/05/0525	Renewal of Unimplemented Planning Permission WK/8/00 for 2-storey side extension	PER
DC/08/1139	Partial demolition and re-build with 2-storey extension (Amendment to previously approved application DC/05/0525)	PER
DC/11/1327	Renewal of unimplemented permission Ref. DC/08/1139 (Partial demolition and re-build with 2-storey extension)	PER

DC/13/0694	Proposed two storey rear and side extension to existing dwelling	PER
DC/16/0494	Erection of a two storey rear and side extension	PER

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

The following section provides a summary of the responses received as a result of internal and external consultation, however, officers have considered the full comments of each consultee which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

3.1 **Arboricultural Officer** – No Objection

- Emergency Tree Preservation Order served on the Copper Beech when it became clear that large specimen would be removed to facilitate proposed development
- Subsequent to site visit and an assessment, it is clear that the tree is a fine specimen no particular health issues and with capacity for future growth. However, its proximity to the house (currently some 8.5m) would require more disfiguring surgery / pruning in the long-term as some lateral branches are already close to the roof
- Although the tree can be viewed from the north, from Brighton Road, it is set back into the property (some 24.5m), and is not readily visible to passing vehicular traffic. There are no other public vantage points and therefore the tree is considered to be a background tree and no more
- Despite the tree's fair form and appeal, it is therefore considered to have a very limited measure of public amenity value, assessed in line with the Planning Practice Guidance
- Although its removal would be regrettable, the loss of the tree would not have a significant and negative impact on the public

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.2 **West Sussex Highways** - No Objection

- Although larger than existing dwelling, the proposal is not anticipated to generate material intensification of use at either access point to the A281.
- Conditions are advised to secure car parking on site and cycle parking

3.3 **Southern Water** - No Objection

- Conditions and informatives are advised regarding the use of wastewater treatment works / septic tank, adequacy of soakaways, potential for public sewers crossing the site and alternative means of foul drainage owing to lack of a public foul sewer in the vicinity

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.4 **Parish Council Consultation** – No Objection

- Provisions that materials be in keeping with local area, drainage is suitable and no external floodlighting added

3.5 **Public Consultations** - To date, 16 letters of support have been received (3 of which are from nearby properties) on the following grounds:

- Design will be an improvement / enhancement over existing dwelling
- Stylish and contemporary - add architectural interest

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

Principle:

- 6.1 The existing property and the annexe on site have a combined footprint of some **192sq.m** and a width of around 13.5m (main house) plus 6.7m (annexe) at ground floor. The two buildings are visually linked at ground floor by way of the brick wall and gated access to the front between the buildings, but at first-floor, the gap between the buildings is more pronounced at approximately 3m.
- 6.2 The extant consent for a significant two-storey side and rear extension last renewed in April 2016 (DC/16/0494) is a material planning consideration. The approved extensions would create a stepped front elevation with subservient 'elements', including a two-storey link between the main house and the retained annexe. The resulting single overall street-facing width would be some 28m at ground floor, and some 25.5m at first floor, with an overall ground floor footprint of some **350sq.m** (including the annexe).
- 6.3 Whilst the extant permission is noted, the current proposal is very different in design and scale, and shares virtually no similarities with the approved permission, apart from the retained footprint of the annexe.
- 6.4 Policy 28 of the HDPF allows for the replacement of dwellings outside the built-up area boundary, provided the development can be accommodated appropriately within the curtilage of the existing dwelling, and should not be disproportionate to the size of the existing dwelling and be in keeping with the scale and character of the existing dwelling.
- 6.5 Officers note the comparative footprints at ground floor between the existing dwelling (and annexe) of some **192sq.m** and the current proposal (and reduced annexe) of around **321sq.m**, which is more than a 100% increase in footprint over and above the existing property. Also of note is the proposed increased width of the proposed replacement dwelling, again resulting in more than a 100% increase over the existing building on site.
- 6.6 In terms of the straightforward comparison between the existing and proposed replacement dwelling, it is considered that the proposal would not accord with the principles of Policy 28 in that the proposal would be disproportionate to the size of the existing dwelling.

Impact on Visual Amenity:

- 6.6 The existing character of the plot is of a 'traditionally' designed house set on a generous plot. Owing to the broken roof-lines and first-floor gaps between the main house and the annexe, along with the gap to the western side of the plot, the scale of development across the plot appears to be minimal.
- 6.10 It is acknowledged that there is a degree of boundary screening to the front of the plot, along with the presence of a garage block which is approximately 10.5m in width. With the fluctuations in front boundary vegetation and the sightlines afforded through the wrought iron gates, the property is visible from the public highway and contributes to the overall countryside setting which prevails in the locality.
- 6.11 Neighbouring development and plot sizes vary with a combination of bungalows and two-storey properties, original footprints and extensive extensions, and varying degrees of front sightlines from the street on account of vegetated front boundaries and gated entrances. However, the resulting street-scene is not one that appears overly dominated by built development across plot widths.
- 6.12 The resulting scale and character of the proposed replacement dwelling has been considered against the scale and character of neighbouring properties and the existing dwelling which currently occupies the plot. Reference is also made to the extant permission and the evolution over the last 16 years of the approved extension proposals. It is noted that the first approved permission in 2000 sought a 6m wide extension to the western side with a stepped building line and roof-form. The recent approval in April 2016 sought a 7.76m wide side extension to the west and a 3m wide linking extension between the two buildings, showing an incremental increase in footprint over the years.
- 6.13 The proposed replacement dwelling would be of a contemporary design with a flat roof. The height of the resulting flat roof would be about 0.4m less than the existing roofline of the house. On account of the height, overall massing and linear design, along with the forward re-siting of the proposed dwelling, it is considered that there would be an adverse impact on the visual qualities of the area.
- 6.14 This concern would be exacerbated by the loss of the Copper Beech tree and landscaping areas to the front of the existing property, which would lead to the increased visual impact of the proposed development and the resulting perception of development across the whole width of the plot.
- 6.15 The works to the retained annexe are intended to provide a visual connection to the contemporary character of the replacement dwelling. However, the resulting disparity between roof-heights of approximately 1.8m and the overall design details would exacerbate the overall alien character of the development.
- 6.16 The resulting development would therefore be out of keeping with the scale and character of the existing dwelling which occupies the plot and harmful to the wider rural character of the area, contrary to local policies.

Impact on Neighbours:

- 6.17 Policy 33 of the HDPF requires that development should avoid unacceptable harm to amenity of occupiers and users of nearby property and land.
- 6.18 The proposal would decrease the distance between the new dwelling and the neighbouring dwelling at Chantry Cottage to the north-west to a distance of some 20m from the current

30m gap. The proposed new first-floor balconies are noted to the southern (rear) and western sides, looking towards the boundary with Chantry Cottage.

- 6.19 The proposed replacement dwelling, including the provision of a first-floor side terrace, is not considered to lead to any detrimental and adverse impacts on the private amenities of the neighbouring property at Chantry Cottage on account of the distances between properties and boundaries.
- 6.20 Changes to the annexe would result in a larger window opening to the first-floor hall-way. Owing to the proximity to the boundary with The Tithe Barn to the east, and the increased window size, it would be recommended that an obscure-glazing condition be added should planning permission be granted.

Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity:

- 6.21 It is noted that the proposed development would lead to the loss of a large Copper Beech to the front of the dwelling, on account of the new building line being brought forward from the existing property line.
- 6.22 Whilst previous proposals have retained some form of gap by creating a stepped front elevation, the current proposal would certainly not be able to retain the tree.
- 6.22 This tree is now subject to an emergency Tree Presentation Order, dated 1st December, which has not yet been confirmed.
- 6.24 Further assessment of the public amenity value of the tree, along with its future potential for retention within the site has revealed that although the tree has the capacity for some increased growth potential, being semi-mature, it is already close to the roofline of the existing dwelling, and is likely to require future disfiguring surgery work.
- 6.25 Although the proposal would necessitate the removal of the tree, the full assessment in regard to the selection of trees for a TPO has revealed that the removal of the tree would be regrettable, but would not lead to harm to the wider public amenity and therefore is acceptable in this instance.

Highways and Parking:

- 6.26 The proposal does not alter the existing vehicular access to the property, the driveway or the triple bay garage that is currently provided.
- 6.27 Although the front building line of the proposed new dwelling would come forward, it would still maintain provision for off-street parking spaces, garaging and turning space within the site, which would be in accordance with policy 41 of the HDPF.

Conclusion:

- 6.28 Consideration has been given to the extant permission for a sizable side / rear extension, first granted in 2000 and subsequently renewed with incremental increases until the most recent extant permission, which expires in April 2019. However, the approved scheme for extensions to the existing property is significantly different to that which is currently being proposed, and would retain the front building line and appearance of the existing property and its impact within the wider street-scene. Furthermore, these permissions have shown no intentions of being implemented over the last 16 years.
- 6.29 In conclusion, the proposal has been considered within the context of the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and against Local Policies set out within

the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015). It is considered that the proposal would be contrary to HDPF policies 1, 2, 25, 28, 32 and 33 in that the development would result in a disproportionately scaled replacement dwelling in a countryside setting, which would lead to detrimental harm to the wider rural setting, on account of the proposed elongated design and building lines.

7. RECOMMENDATION: Application Refused

7.1 It is recommended that planning permission be refused for the following reason:

- 1 The proposed replacement dwelling would be of an unacceptable scale, mass and design, by virtue of its elongated form and design, and new building line, would appear overly dominant within the wider street-scene. The proposal would therefore be harmful to the wider countryside setting and character, contrary to the provisions of policy 1, 2, 25, 28, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).

Background Papers: DC/16/2279