Mr I Salter
Mr P Bishop

WB/09/0233/FULL
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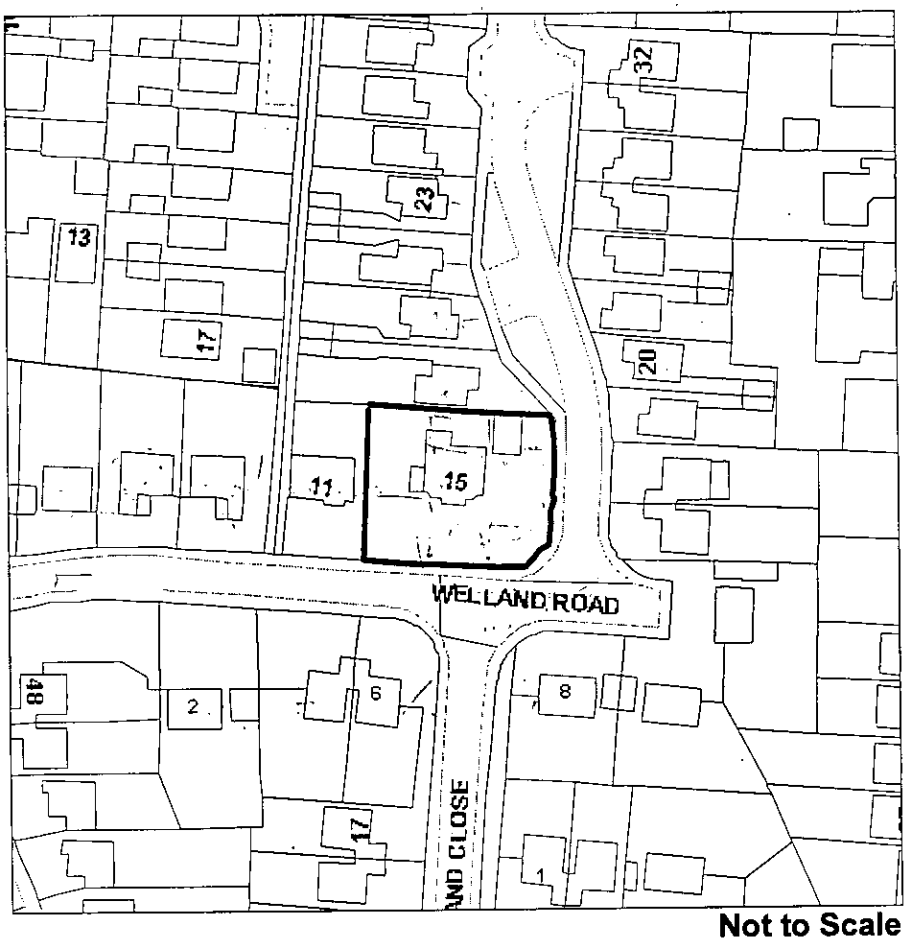
Location : 15 Welland Road

Proposal: Demolition of existing property and garage and redevelopment with four semi-detached houses with parking for five cars.



Not to Scale

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1. THE PROPOSAL AND THE SITE

This is a proposal for the construction of two pairs of three storey semi-detached dwellings following demolition of the existing bungalow and garage.

The existing bungalow enjoys a corner position and the site slopes from north to south with a 1.5 metres change in level. The site is separated from neighbouring properties to the north and west by walls and fencing and being an open plan estate, it has a fairly open aspect to the south and east but with shrubs and trees in the highway verge adjacent to the eastern boundary.

The character of the area is residential, consisting mainly of two storey detached houses, with a distinctive character of fairly low pitched roofs, with tile hanging and buildings set well back from the street frontage, along staggered building lines. Properties to the south, west and east are set in fairly spacious plots, whereas to the north the plot width narrows.

The proposed four dwellings would be constructed as two pairs of three storey semi-detached houses facing southward and the front elevations set back from the front boundary by 8.7 metres, staggered slightly forward of No. 11 to the west with a bay projection beyond this. At a depth of 8.9 metres, the buildings alignment would provide rear gardens of approximately 8 metres in depth. The westernmost building would be positioned 1.5 metres from the western boundary with spacing of 3 metres between the two proposed buildings. The easternmost building would be positioned 3.66 metres from the eastern boundary. This equates to the proposed east facing flank elevation being positioned approximately 7.5 metres forward of No. 17 to the north. Each building would be 9.85 metres in width.

The buildings would have three floors and have been designed with barn-hip roofs and bay windows. The ridge height would be 8.4 metres and the eaves height would be 4.7 metres. Brickwork and plain tiles are proposed to match neighbouring properties and windows and doors would be in PVCu.

Each dwelling would comprise of approximately 98m^2 of floor area, with living and kitchen/dining area on the ground floor, 3 bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor and the master bedroom with ensuite bathroom within the roof space which is served by roof light windows on the rear roof slope.

Car parking for five vehicles and a turning area is proposed to the frontage.

2. APPLICANT'S DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The applicant's statement is summarised below:-

"Amount
The proposal is to demolish the existing bungalow, and garage, and redevelop the site in four semi-detached houses

Layout
All houses will be accessed from the parking areas into their own entrance doors, with side gate access to rear gardens. New entry doors, and ground floor windows will be of a 'Secured by Design' type for maximum security.

Scale
The maximum overall dimensions of the proposal will be as follows:-
Height :- 8.25 metres at garden level, 9.25 metres above road level
Width:- 9.85 metres each pair
Depth:- 8.85 metres

Landscaping
The existing landscape will be retained – this is currently a mix of grass, gravel and concrete – and tidied up as required. There are several trees on the site, and these will be retained where possible. New planting to be agreed. It is suggested that the new parking area will be in brick pavers with suitable drainage system included.

Appearance
The appearance of the proposal will be a pair of semi-detached houses in facing brickwork and plain tiled roofs.

Use
The use of the proposal will be residential.

Access
The site is sloping, and access to the buildings will be from a levelled drive/parking area. Provision has been made for the storage of cycles. There are bus routes available in the area, one being in New Road to the south, a half mile walk away; another is on the main A27 Arundel Road to the north, accessed from a footpath adjacent to the property to the west. There is a small parade of shops to the south-east of the site, and a major supermarket to the south-west."

The applicant has also submitted a Sustainability Report which confirms his intention to meet a Code Level 3 standard.

3. CONSULTATIONS

The **Highway Authority** has made the following comments:-

"The proposal is for the demolition of existing property and garage and redevelopment with four semi-detached houses with parking for five cars. In terms of parking I can confirm that the proposed level of parking does not exceed the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) maximum parking standard for the development proposed. In terms of parking layout, an adequate area of hardstanding is shown to permit turning within the site. Cycle parking in line with the WSCC minimum standards has been provided. This should be secure and covered.

This application will result in a modest intensification of use of the existing and new access points onto Welland Road. However, from inspection of the supporting plans, there appears to be no apparent visibility issues at the access onto Welland Road. Pedestrian visibility splays have been shown on the submitted drawing 8008:2, any proposed planting should be no higher than 0.6m above the ground level and any existing foliage should be maintained in order to safeguard the visibility splay.

I have also checked the most recently available verified accident records, which reveal that there have been no personal injury accidents in the vicinity of the of the proposed new and existing points of access. Evidence suggests

that developments of this type are unlikely to result in increased access or safety concerns. The new access must not exceed 4.5metres in width. Any works on the highway must be agreed with the WSCC Local Engineer and carried out under licence."

The **Executive Head of Health, Housing and Community Safety** raises no objection subject to the following condition:

"If during development, any visible contaminated or odorous material, (for example asbestos containing material, stained soil, petrol/diesel/solvent odour, underground tanks or associated pipework) not previously identified, is found to be present at the site, then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until it has been investigated by the developer. The Local Planning Authority must be informed immediately of the nature and degree of the contamination present and a method statement detailing how the unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with must be prepared and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing before being implemented."

The **Strategic Planning and Regeneration Manager** has commented as follows:-

"The main issue from a planning policy perspective would be in respect of Saved Policy H10 – Loss of existing dwellings. There is a permitted exception to this policy which allows for the loss of an existing dwelling where the proposal provides for an overall increase in the number of dwellings. In this instance the proposal is for loss of one house and the development of four semi-detached houses. Subject to design and general dc considerations there would not be any objection raised in respect of the principle of the proposal."

4. REPRESENTATIONS

Twenty nine letters of objection have been received submitting the following comments:-

i) Over development – the plot is not sufficient for the scale of development proposed resulting in overcrowding and inappropriate density.
ii) Character/design issues - Semi-detached houses are not in keeping; no garages and no front gardens; will detract from existing character; unnecessary steep roofs; prominent positioning, poor appearance of parking, bins and hard surfacing at front; design different to existing houses; dominant roof; small rear gardens; insufficient space for bins.
iii) Parking - Insufficient parking proposed, space for parking/turning inadequate, loss of on street parking, traffic/parking congestion, problems with access for emergency services.
iv) Road safety issues – blind corner, additional traffic, reversing vehicles, etc.

v) Amenity - Loss of light, outlook and privacy, overshadowing, additional noise including noise and disruption caused by demolition and construction work.
vi) Loss of views.
vii) Accommodation is unbalanced and does not encourage family cohesion.
viii) Existing property represents a part of the area's history.
ix) Development is not needed.
x) Would set a harmful precedent.
xi) Landscape - potential loss of trees, details of condition of existing site are inaccurate, not clear how landscape will be retained.
xii) Drainage issues – system will not cope with 4 houses.
xiii) Additional rainwater run-off.
xiv) Disruption to television signal.
xv) Reduction in property values.
xvi) There are discrepancies and errors in the sustainability report.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The main issues raised by this proposal are: the principle of residential development; the impact on the amenity of neighbours and future occupiers; design and impact on the character of the surrounding area; and parking and access. As such the application should be principally considered against Saved Local Plan Policies BE1, TR9, and H18 and West Sussex Structure Plan Saved Policies ERA1, LOC1, DEV1, CH1, DEV4 and DEV5. Government policy in PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS3: Housing, and PPG13: Transport and allied design and other guidance is also particularly relevant.

Principle

The general principle of more intensive residential use of brownfield land in the existing urban area is supported in Saved West Sussex Structure Plan Policies ERA1 and LOC1 and in PPS3. The proposal would likewise contribute towards the achievement of the Structure Plan housing provision target. Whilst the principle may be supported, the acceptability of the scheme is dependant on relevant environmental considerations as discussed below.

Impact of the amenity of neighbours and future occupiers

In terms of residential amenity, the main impact would be to No. 17 to the north. The existing dwelling, at No. 17, is oriented towards the east with its south elevation positioned approximately 1 metre from the northern boundary of the site. It has two ground floor windows in this south elevation. The distance between the proposed dwellings and the side wall of No. 17 would be 9.5 metres. Although the ground slopes away to the south, the proposed siting is poor in relation to the existing dwelling at No. 17. Due to its closeness and the fact that the buildings would be positioned 7.5 metres forward of the front elevation of this property, the proposed houses would be

overbearing and result in increased overlooking from rear windows with an increased sense of enclosure.

No. 11 to the west has one ground floor secondary window to its east elevation. The positioning and depth of the proposed buildings avoids any significant impact in terms of loss of light or outlook. However, having regard to the fairly spacious character of the area, and the degree of separation between the existing and neighbouring dwellings, the neighbouring properties would experience loss of amenity from the intensification of the use of this site for four dwellings.

First floor windows to the side elevations would serve bathrooms and could be obscure glazed and fixed to avoid any overlooking.

Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area

The scale and number of dwellings proposed does not reflect the existing spacious character of the area and would represent an overdevelopment of the site relating poorly to the other properties, particularly being set significantly forward (eastwards) of No. 17 to the north. The spacing between the two proposed buildings and between the proposed buildings and neighbouring properties does not reflect the relatively spacious character of the immediate area. The height of the buildings proposed would exceed its neighbours and would be overbearing in relation to them.

This adverse impact is further emphasised by the detailed design which appears poorly conceived particularly in relation to the dominance and design of the roofs giving a top-heavy appearance which, in combination with the barn-hip, appears alien in this context. In addition, the design does not reflect the horizontal emphasis seen in the design of the neighbouring properties.

The parking area has been designed as a communal facility for five cars and although this reduces the number of vehicle crossings and maximises the soft landscaping, this would result in a large expanse of hard surfacing dominating the setting and appearance of the frontage which would be out of character in this locality

Several trees are identified as being removed. There is also a pine tree which appears to be affected by the development. However, due to the sizes and types of trees identified, their loss would not have a significant impact on the visual amenities of the site providing a suitable landscaping scheme was implemented. The landscaping on the highway verge to the east would need to be protected during construction but would provide a softening to the appearance of the development on this side. Despite this, the overall loss of garden area for parking would be particularly harmful and would be detrimental to visual amenities of the area in general.

Parking and access

The site is within walking distance of bus services in Adur Avenue and five car parking spaces are proposed. The applicant has also indicated that provision

would be made for storing 8 bicycles, the position and design of which could be agreed by condition. In terms of parking standards the maximum standard for the proposed dwellings would be 12 parking spaces.

Having regard to the dwelling type and sizes proposed, the development is likely to result in increased pressure for parking. However, notwithstanding the concerns expressed by local residents in this respect, the proposed development is in accordance with the maximum parking standards and it is considered that a refusal could not be justified on the basis of an increased parking shortfall, particularly in the absence of an objection from the Highway Authority.

Conclusion

Although the principle of residential development may be acceptable, development of this scale on this limited site would be out of character with its surroundings and would result in a cramped overdevelopment of the site relating poorly to its context to the detriment of the neighbouring occupiers and the visual amenities of the area.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse on the grounds that:-

1. The proposed dwellings, by virtue of their unsympathetic siting, scale, bulk, height and design, would represent a cramped and overbearing overdevelopment of the site which would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area and the amenities of adjoining occupiers, resulting in loss of outlook and privacy with an increased sense of enclosure. As such the proposal is considered contrary to Saved Policies BE1 and H18 of the Worthing Local Plan 2003, Saved Policies CH1 and DEV1 of the West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016, PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, and PPS3: Housing.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Observations of the Highway Authority
Observations of the Executive Head of Health, Housing and Community Safety
Observations of Strategic Planning and Regeneration Manager
Letters of representation by Members of the Public

12 May 2009