6 ROOKSACRE COTTAGES, SOMPTING
PROPOSED 2-STOREY SIDE EXTENSION

APPEAL STATEMENT AND APPENDICES

Malcolm Lewis

Architect and Planning Consultant

05/12/2016

1.0 The site and its surroundings

1.1 No. 6 Rooksacre Cottages occupies the eastern end of a terrace of three dwellings which are located on the northern side of West Street and within the Sompting Conservation Area. To the east of the site is a large detached property known as Trelawny's Cottage and to the west is Westcroft, No. 1 Rooksacre Cottages being at the rear.

1.2 Apart from the slate covered pitched roof, the three properties in the terrace do not form a uniform composition due, in the main, to the various alterations and additions which have occurred since the designation of the Conservation Area, an area which was extended in 1992. No. 3 Rooksacre Cottages has a 2-storey rear and side extension which was refused in 1993 but allowed on appeal in June 1994 (Appendix 1 – to follow when received from the Council). It also has the benefit of a substantial projecting front bay window with a slate covered pitched roof, above which is a large modern casement window. The centre property is the largest of the three and has an open parking area across the whole frontage with a flight of steps leading to a sizeable entrance porch which has a pitched and hipped slate covered roof. The appeal property was also extended at its eastern end with a single storey garage and dining room following the grant of planning permission in 1998. In addition, planning permission was granted in 2008 for a new entrance portico and the conversion of the garage to a study.



2.0 The appeal development

2.1 The appeal proposal seeks to construct a first floor extension over the 2008 permission providing two additional bedrooms and a bathroom. The roof of the extension would be pitched with a ridge height some 800mm below that of the main roof and would be covered with matching slate. In line with the rest of the terrace the walls would be finished with a smooth render.

2.2 The planning application was submitted to the Council on 22 September 2016 and refused for one reason on 18 November 2016.

1 *The proposal is unacceptable in that the scale, design and appearance of the proposed first floor side extension would be unsympathetic to the proportion of the terrace property and group of terrace properties comprising 3, 4-5 and 6 Rooksacre Cottages. The proposed extension would appear prominent when viewed from West Street to the south and would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is contrary to saved policies AB4 and AH7 of the Adur Local Plan and the NPPF.*

3.0 The main issue

3.1 Having regard to the reason for refusal of planning permission it is considered that the main issue to be determined in this case is:

1. *Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Sompting Conservation Area.*

4.0 Planning Policy

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework – March 2012. It is considered that the following national guidance documents are of relevance to this proposal and, as such, will need to be addressed in any decision.

4.2 This document sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It advises that development should contribute to sustainable economic development, should protect and enhance the natural environment together with the quality and character of existing communities, and should ensure high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources. It goes on to state that development should support existing communities and contribute to

the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community. It places emphasis on creating sustainable forms of development and advises local authorities to encourage developers to reduce energy use and help to address the causes and potential impacts of climate change.

4.3 Saved Policy AB4 seeks to ensure that proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area. However, the Inspector will be aware that this exceeds the statutory test of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. Policy AH7 sets out a number of criteria against which proposals for extensions will be examined. Development Control Standard 3 – Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings indentifies a number of standards which should be considered when designing extensions to existing residential properties.

5.0 Statement of case

Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Sompting Conservation Area.

5.1 Notwithstanding the comments made by the occupier of Trelawneys Cottage to the east it is noted that the Council has no objection to the proposal in respect of residential amenity. The appellant concurs with the Council on this issue due not only to the separating distance involved and the difference in height between the two properties but also to the fact that there are no windows in the east elevation of the proposed extension.

5.2 The appellant notes that the Council agrees that the principle of extensions to residential properties is acceptable. In this case the Council also accepts that the 3 properties in the terrace are not uniform but goes on to incorrectly state that the window openings on the front elevation of the terrace are of similar proportion and predominately symmetrical in nature. The Inspector has only to view the windows in No.3 to see that the Council is mistaken in this assertion.

5.3 When the 2-storey side and rear extension at No.3 was allowed on appeal the inspector would have considered the impact of that extension on the appearance of the terrace and on the character of the Conservation Area and clearly came to the conclusion that it would not be harmed. At that stage of course the terrace would have been far more intact than it is today as the single storey extensions at No.6 would not have been constructed or the changes to the front elevation of No.3 built. It is also interesting to note in the officer's report that the Council now finds that the 2-storey extension at No.3 would not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area when no doubt in refusing this application in 1993 it came to the conclusion that it would.

5.4 In this proposal, the extension would be set back from the front elevation in line with Council policy and would have a matching slate covered pitched roof at a height some 0.8m below that main hipped roof of the overall terrace. There can therefore be no doubt that the extension would appear subservient to No.6 and to the terrace as a whole. As such, the extension would not have a harmful impact on the appearance of the terrace, which over the years since the 1994 appeal decision, has substantially altered. Given this conclusion and the facts presented, the appellant is firmly of the opinion that the character of the Conservation Area would not be harmed. It would thus be preserved in accordance with the statutory test.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The conclusion is therefore reached that the proposal would not conflict with saved Policy AB4 and Policy AH7 or the advice contained in National Planning Policy Framework. The extension would not harm the appearance of the much altered terrace and would not harm either the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Appendix 1

Appeal decision at No.3 Rooksacre Cottages (to follow when received from the Council)