Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1869/20 Recommendation – REFUSE

Site: 126 Old Fort Road, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex

Proposal: Remodelling of existing dwelling by raising the ridge height to form 3 storeys with balconies at front and rear. Ground floor front extensions with two cantilevered carports and balconies over to north elevation.

Date of site visit: 21st December 2020

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site is a contemporary style two storey dwelling house on the south side of Old Fort Road. Consent was granted in 2012 to remodel an existing chalet bungalow to create a two storey development, AWDM/0674/12. As with other properties adjacent on this side of the road the dwelling is set back from the highway with a large driveway and frontage and smaller rear garden onto the beach. Properties either side and opposite vary in style, design and use of materials many of which are new builds.

Permission is sought to remodel the existing two storey dwelling to create a full three storey house with flat roof. The central section of the building will project forward creating a new glazed vertical entrance hall and stairwell. There is some set in either side of the central feature with a tiered affect design. Balconies are proposed to the front to either side with the rear elevation being predominantly glazing and balconies the full width of the building. Two cantilever car ports are proposed at ground floor either side of the building projection forward of the main bulk of development.

The footprint of the building is increased beyond that of existing increasing to the front of the site it does not project to the rear any further and the width of the building remains as existing. The height of the building and the bulk and scale to the front and rear will be increased. Amended plans have been received which show some set in to the side at second floor level. This was following officer's advice in relation to the increased bulk and scale at first and second floor. Particularly when viewed from the front, this combined with the increased height and lack of relief or set back to the central vertical element of the building design gives rise to a dominant feature. The amended plans are for consideration here.

White render is proposed to match the existing dwelling house with steel effect windows and glass balustrades to match existing.

Representations

Shoreham Beach Association: - Objection – Design, Overdevelopment, Privacy, Light and Noise.

- The drawings provide no dimensions, no scale drawing of the neighbours houses either side.
- Another storey may adversely affect the enjoyment of the adjacent properties and privacy.
- The design particularly to the rear of the property produces a 'terraced' effect as it is so close and overbearing in the street scene.
- Assurance would be required that the construction of this building will be without access over or disturbance to the beach and that no debris or building machinery will be left on the beach or damage it in any way.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15
'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.2 Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings.
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises upgrading the existing housing stock located within the built up area and can be supported in principle. The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and the effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling and its surroundings.

Visual amenity, Character and Street Scene

The existing dwelling house is simplistic in form and of contemporary design with white render and grey fenestration detailing. The dwelling as proposed here will represent another addition to the already rather eclectic street scene in Old Fort Road. New replacement dwellings and older style buildings sit side by side all varying in style and use of materials to form the very unique character of this locality.

The design and individual style of the remodelled dwelling proposed here has been developed by the architect and their client. It is not considered that the specific style of design can be questioned and it is not considered that there would be any grounds for refusal based solely on the overall design of the proposal as the street comprises so much variation. The key consideration here is how the development fits in scale, height and proportion in relation to the adjacent dwellings and surrounding, existing development.

As stated above the footprint of the building will be increasing with scale, bulk and height in turn increased from that which currently exists. When considering the existing, adjacent built form there are other examples of three storey buildings so the principle of the number of storeys and the height would not be inconsistent with adjacent development. The use of materials and set in from the adjacent side boundaries is also acceptable in terms of the street scene and character of the locality.

The three storey 'tiered' design allows for the top floor to be set in from the boundaries either side, the amended plans show a slight increase of this set in which is welcomed. However the primary concern here is that of the vertical front section which forms a prominent central feature to the building. This section has no set in, tiered effect or relief to the front it forms a solid, bulky mass of building projecting significantly forward at first and second floor. At first floor the projection is 2.1 metres and at second floor the combination of the height increase and projection forward results in an expanse of flat roof from front to back of 10 metres. When approaching the site from either side this expanse of flat roof projecting forward at three storeys in height will be prominent and is inconsistent with other adjacent development. It would protrude beyond the adjacent flat roof building and combined with the ground and first floor front extensions will be overly large and prominent within the street scene. The large scale redevelopment surrounding the site does not set a precedent for such a development in this case which is considered to differ and be harmful for the reasons set out above. Officers have requested a set back at second floor to reflect other similar, 'tiered' designs on Old Fort Road the use of such a technique would address this problem. However amended plans have not been forthcoming and the proposed design is therefore for determination here.

In addition to the inconsistency with the immediate adjacent development in terms of the large scale bulk, scale and prominence at second floor this case is also inconsistent with a similar design at no. 98 Old Fort Road. This new dwelling permitted under AWDM/1143/13 shows a similar design principle of that designed here and it shows a central three storey feature with flat roof. However in this case the depth of this section is less so resulting in a less prominent and obtrusive feature than would be the case here.

It should also be noted that the recent appeal at no. 66 Old Fort Road which was allowed does also not justify consent being granted in this case. The Inspector noted, "Large detached houses are the dominant type of development and these vary considerably in respect of scale, design and age which is an interesting display of the evolution of architectural fashion." However "The appeal scheme does not set a precedent each scheme must be assessed on its own merits." In this case the design, scale and footprint differs from that permitted at appeal and those adjacent properties also vary. In this case the front projection combined with the development as a whole in relation to the adjacent built form will be large, bulky and out of scale, a large scale dominant and incongruous feature. It does not relate sympathetically to the adjacent built form. The appeal case was a fully tiered development which allowed for a break down in form and bulk. The agent has submitted a supporting statement via a Planning Consultant making reference to this appeal decision as a justification for approval in this case. Although the content is noted in this case there is a clear reason as to why the form of the building is unacceptable in this case and

its inconsistency with the street scene and other developments has been detailed above.

Residential amenity

The properties either side are those most affected by the proposed development. These both have limited openings on the side elevations with some small secondary windows. These currently both face onto the side of the existing dwelling house. The increased height will therefore not give rise to any increased loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact that would be of any significance here. The balconies are shown to have privacy screens as existing and this relationship between properties with adjacent balconies is commonplace on Shoreham Beach.

The front bulky projection of building is the central section only and therefore set in from the boundaries either side, the building is also no closer to the side boundaries than existing. It will therefore not give rise to any adverse impact on neighbouring amenities. The building will be visible from properties opposite the increased height would not result in any significant impact which would warrant a refusal in this case.

Recommendation

REFUSE

1. The proposal by reason of its excessive scale, bulk and massing would be out of keeping and detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding built environment therefore contrary to Policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan and the NPPF.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Hannah Barker Date: 6 October 2021

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 7 October 2021