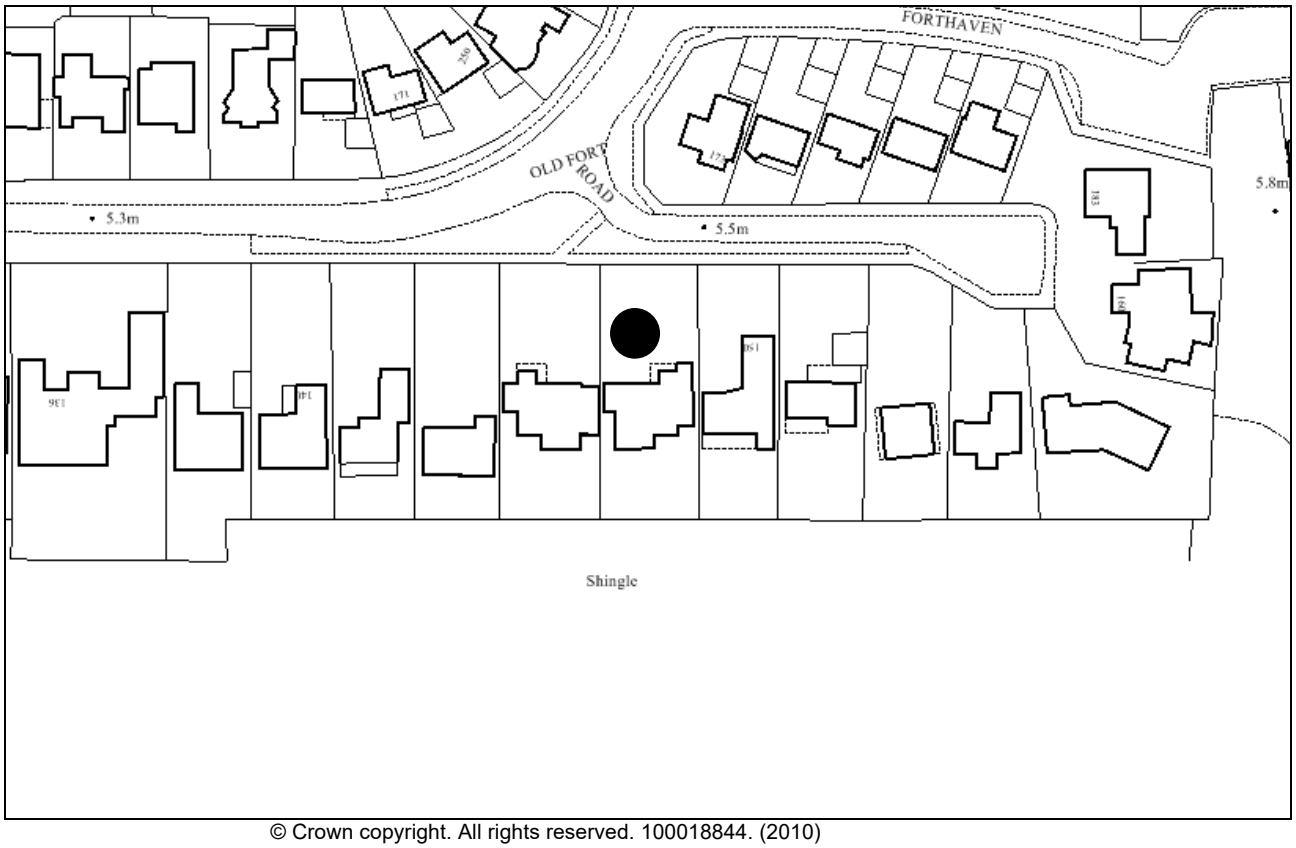
Application Number: ADC/0394/10 Recommendation - APPROVE

Site: 148 Old Fort Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5HL

Proposal: Demolition of existing house and erection of three-storey detached house with single-storey garage/gym at front (and front and rear balconies) and re-positioned access



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The Application

This application was deferred at the Committee meeting on 6 December 2010 to seek amendment of the application. No specific revisions were sought but Members were concerned about the mass of the building, particularly the top storey, and the elevational design, especially the roof. They were also concerned about the effect on the neighbouring house to the east caused by the enlarged front projection.

Amended plans have now been received. The top storey has been amended, reducing the floor area of the 2 bedrooms/ensuites, and lowering the side walls to incorporate shallow mono-pitched roofs with interlocking slates. The depth of the front projection has been reduced by 1.2m.

The property is situated on the south side of the road where it becomes a cul-de-sac. The proposal is for redevelopment of the existing detached house with a three-storey, five-bedroom house of contemporary design, with a single-storey garage/gym front projection. Front and rear balconies are proposed on the new house. It is also proposed to re-position the access slightly.

The existing house, in common with neighbouring houses, is set well back from the road with a large front driveway and, to the rear, the garden (with a swimming pool to be retained) backs onto the beach. It is of a conventional two-storey ridge-roofed design, with a flat-roofed garage set forward on the eastern side of the front elevation. There is also a front dormer.

The adjacent houses to the east and west are of a similar scale and design to the existing house on the application site, but the one to the east has a ridge height of 7.2m. There are generally similar houses opposite. However, to the east, at the end of the cul-de-sac, are two flat-roofed dwellings of more contemporary design including No.158 (ADC/0172/09). There are other examples of houses that have been redeveloped or extensively remodelled to contemporary design to the west, for example, No.124 Old Fort Road currently under construction (ADC/0109/10 & ADC/0415/09).

The proposed new house will be virtually the same overall height (8.3m) as the existing house (8.2m). The footprint will not be greatly increased, the maximum total depth (as now amended) being 16.2m and width 15.7m (including the front/side projection).

As on the plans originally submitted with this application, the top storey is set in from the main side, front and rear walls behind a surrounding parapet. Its width has now been reduced by 0.5m to 10m and the side walls reduced in height by 1.2m, so that they now incorporate tiled mono-pitched roofs instead of the flat roof with parapets previously shown. The overall height remains at 8.3m but the sides now have an eaves line of 7m height. The timber boarded cladding proposed for the walls of the upper storey has been deleted and all the walls are to be white self-coloured rendering, as are the walls of the single-storey front projection which is shown with a grey tiled roof (surrounding a small front roof terrace). At ground floor level the rendered walls have inset lines and there is a base course of blue-grey bricks. Central full height glazing (solar controlled) is proposed at the front, over the staircase and entrance hall. To the rear, balconies are proposed at first and second floor level.

Internally it will comprise of a garage, gym, hall, garden room, bathroom and two bedrooms on the ground floor. On the first floor are the kitchen, sitting room/study (with access to the rear balcony/terrace), and third bedroom (with access to the front roof terrace). At second floor level are the fourth and fifth bedrooms with ensuite facilities and access to the other rear balcony.

This application follows the withdrawal of ADC/0231/10 which also sought permission for a three-storey contemporary house but higher and bulkier with an asymmetric roof and more vertical emphasis to the design.

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties: Residents have been re-notified of the amended plans and were given until 23 February to submit their comments.

On the plans as originally submitted, 3 letters and a petition (with 28 signatures from nearby residents of Old Fort Road and Harbour Way) of objection were received. The letters are from the residents of No's 146, 150 and 152 Old Fort Road. They raise the following issues:-

- Three-storey building height is visually overbearing; it resembles a block of flats; and is out of character with the neighbouring properties.
- The site is not within a long spacious area, it is in a narrow congested cul-de-sac.
- Other developments in Old Fort Road should not be regarded as setting a precedent for this form of development.
- Overlooking and loss of privacy; the second-floor balcony will overlook the rear of the adjacent dwellings; the front roof terrace will overlook the house to the east (a screen is required).
- Loss of light; loss of sunlight to rear garden; the front extension would result in loss of light to front lounge window adjacent to the east.
- The bin store should be moved away from neighbours.
- The pumphouse for the swimming pool should be moved to the bottom of the garden and sound proofed.

[NB. one of the Ward Councillors asked for the application to be determined by the Committee]

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

The South East Plan 2006-2026 (GOSE 2009): SCT1, SP3, CC6, H5, BE1
Adopted Adur District Local Plan (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2, AH5 and Appendix 11 Supplementary Planning Guidance comprising Development Control Standard 2 “Space Around New Dwellings”
PPS1 ‘Delivering Sustainable Development’ (ODPM 2005)
PPS3 ‘Housing’ (DCLG 2006)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The SE Plan sets out the long term spatial planning framework for the region with the aim of achieving more sustainable development, protecting the environment and combatting climate change. Policy SP3 (urban focus and urban renaissance) requires LPAs to formulate policies to achieve at least 60% of all new developments on previously developed land and ensure that developments are well-designed and consistent with the principles of urban renaissance and sustainable development. Policy CC6 (sustainable communities and environmental character) refers to creating a local shared vision to create sustainable and distinctive communities, and together with BE1 (urban renaissance management) promotes design solutions relevant to context which build upon local character, distinctiveness and sense of place. NB. the Secretary of State has issued a Ministerial Statement that the Government’s intention to revoke the Regional Plans is a material planning consideration (and a recent challenge to this in the High Court was lost).

Policy SCT1 gives priority to pro-actively pursuing sustainable economic growth and regeneration of the Sussex Coast whilst also protecting and enhancing its high environmental quality, its cultural and historic assets and promoting excellence in design of new developments in recognition of their importance to economic success and quality of life.

Local Plan policy AH2 relates to new residential development (by way of infilling and redevelopment) and states that new dwellings should be designed so that their

appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live and are in keeping with and enhance the existing local environment with particular attention being paid to architectural form, height, materials, density, layout of buildings and hardsurfaced areas; they do not have an unneighbourly effect due to loss of privacy; daylight/sunlight; outlook or open space, incorporating adequate standards of residential amenity for the new dwellings in terms of amenity space, daylight, outlook and privacy; access and parking provision meets the adopted standards; and they accord with the Council's DC Standard No.2 'Space around New Dwellings and Flats'.

Government policy guidance in PPS1 states:-

> *"Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."*

It also refers to the commitment to protecting and improving the environment and states that planning should seek to maintain and improve the local environment and help to mitigate the effects of declining environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as design.

PPS3 encourages best use of urban land for housing development, without rigid application of parking and amenity space standards. However, it also seeks to improve the quality and attractiveness of residential areas and urges imaginative designs and layouts which make more efficient and sustainable use of land without compromising the quality of the environment. PPS3 also states that Councils should "*facilitate good design by identifying the distinctive features that define the character of a particular local area……...The density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring a replication of existing style of form……If done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment."*

Visual Amenity

As to the contemporary style and form contrasting with the traditional form of architecture in this vicinity, whilst subjective views on modern design will differ, it is considered that it would be very difficult to justify refusal because of the mixture of dwellings in the road as a whole and the other contemporary buildings within a fairly short distance. Old Fort Road as a whole has a mixture of dwellings varying greatly in height, scale and design. In the immediate vicinity of this particular site, the houses are pitch-roofed and of traditional appearance, although some have been greatly extended (as at No.136). However, there are houses of flat-roofed contemporary design within a fairly short distance at the head of the cul-de-sac to the east and at No.124 to the west which is partially completed. In the road as a whole, a considerable degree of remodelling of dwellings to the personal preferences of the owners, fundamentally changing the appearance and character of those dwellings has been allowed to take place, especially recently, thereby adding to the overall mix.

The proposed new dwelling would result in a fundamental change in appearance from a house of typical conventional ridge-roofed design to a contemporary form. The amended plans now submitted show tiled mono pitches on the upper storey, similar to those on the contemporary house at No.58 (about half mile west). The overall height of the building remains at 8.3m but the sides of the upper storey are now lowered to 7m. The neighbouring ridge-roofed house to the west is 8.2m in overall

height but the house to the east has a ridge line which is about 1m lower (approx 7m). The scale of the proposed new house will still be larger than the existing house and, combined with the proposed full height central front glazing, would still create a building that would stand out in the streetscene. However, the change to the roof design creates a roof shape and form that is less stark and more harmonious. It is felt to be a significant improvement on the previously submitted design.

In addition, the depth of the front projection has been reduced, along with the depth of its front roof terrace, and this will help the building to be better assimilated into the streetscene.

Residential Amenity

The properties either side of the site, No.150 to the east and No.146 to the west, are both two-storey detached houses of similar style to the existing house on the application site. Adjacent to the boundary with No.150, the proposals involve replacing the existing flat-roofed garage on the application site with a larger hip-roofed projection (with small roof terrace) accommodating a garage, gym and entrance hall. As originally submitted, it was proposed to extend it forward of the existing garage by 2m but this is reduced to 0.8m on the amended plans. Taking account of its side wall being approximately 1m from the low boundary wall (as compared to the existing 0.5m), it is considered that, as amended, it would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on daylighting to or outlook from No.150 which has a recessed front lounge window. The room concerned is also served by south-facing windows. The roof terrace will be 4m from the boundary with No.150 and only extend 2m forwards of the front elevation of the main house. A condition can be imposed requiring a suitable privacy screen on its east side (projecting about 1m above the top of the surrounding tiled roof).

The additional height and scale of the dwelling is not considered to have an adverse impact on the adjacent properties, in terms of loss of light or overbearing impact, to a degree that would warrant refusal.

The main concern from both the adjacent dwellings and those beyond is the impact of the rear balconies. There is an existing first-floor balcony at the application site and other properties have similar features, for example, No's 144, 146, 152. Consequently, there is existing mutual overlooking between properties and the proposed first-floor balcony will not result in any material increase in overlooking than already exists; nevertheless, privacy screens at the sides will be installed to improve on the current situation.

A second-floor balcony would potentially result in more widespread overlooking because of its greater height, giving longer distance views including obliquely over the rear gardens of both the adjacent dwellings and those beyond. The applicants have addressed the concerns by insetting the balcony from the sides of the house, limiting it to 2.5m in depth, and proposing obscure-glazed privacy screens either side (1.7m-2.1m high), thereby directing the angle of view towards the beach and sea and preventing direct sideways overlooking. An oblique view would still be possible over neighbouring gardens but not, it is considered, to be to an extent significantly greater than from the first-floor balcony.

Concerns have also been raised by the neighbours about bin stores and pool plant. Details of the refuse store are to be conditioned below to ensure suitable provision is made and appropriate enclosures. However, the existing swimming pool and pool plant is to be retained as existing and not relocated. The impact will be no greater

than existing with regard to noise and no change can be required as part of the present application.

The proposed dwelling provides generous living space with pleasant southerly aspect, front and rear balconies, rear amenity space and off street parking, therefore complying with the Council's Internal Space Guidance and Development Control Standards in those respects.

Access and Parking

As stated above, the existing vehicular access from Old Fort Road will be slightly realigned. Parking on the forecourt area within the site will remain as well as within the new integral garage where there is also space for cycle storage.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and, as amended, would not detract from the existing local urban environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2), the South East Plan (SCT1, SP3, CC6, H5, BE1) and PPS3.

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)
2. C8Gii (Parking facilities)
3. C8Fi(Garage to be provided and retained for such use)
4. C9N (Temporary provision for contractors vehicles)
5. C12Ai (Details of external materials for walls and roof of building to be approved)
6. C18E3 (No additional windows to be formed in the side walls without planning permission)
7. Prior to occupation of the proposed house, obscure-glazed privacy screens shall be provided on either side of the proposed first-floor and second-floor rear balconies and front roof terrace in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. These screens shall thereafter be retained permanently.
8. Details of the siting, scale and appearance of any solar panels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA prior to their installation and shall be installed and retained in accordance with such details as approved.
9. C18C3 (Windows in the east and west side elevations of the building to be fitted permanently with obscured glass and be non-openable)
10. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following amended plans: -
    Drawing No's 020310/TP.01E, 02G, 03F, 04E, 05G and 06C all received on 26 January 2011.

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