From: Claire Soper <[redacted]>
Sent: 17 August 2021 09:21
To: North2
Subject: APPEAL - APP/Y3805/W/21/3275187 - FAO: Terry Scott

Please confirm receipt of this appeal. Many thanks

APP/Y3805/W/21/3275187

Land opposite 17-19 Victoria Road, Shoreham, West Sussex, BN43 5LA

APPEAL OBJECTION

16/08/2021

This objection is made by the following residents who live in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, and who would be directly and adversely affected by the proposal to build a new house.

Bill and Max Sweatman, 19a Victoria Road

Lucy Wales, 17, Victoria Road

Claire Soper, 17a, Victoria Road

Tim and Jenny Holter, 15 Victoria Road

Alan and Diane Berwick, 13 Victoria Road

These comments supplement those objections already made at the application stage.

Application documents:

The design and access statement includes images of the proposed dwelling, particularly that on the front page of the document, that give a wholly misleading impression of the width of the private lane adjacent to the proposed house and do not show the walls on the north side of the lane. The location is a narrow, unmade lane, not the paved urban courtyard depicted on the drawings.

Layout and design:

The recent appeal decision (APP/Y3805/W/20/3266076) concerning a dwelling of different design but identical siting, recognised the unique character of the site location and concluded that the previous siting would be at odds with the immediate built environment. Siting was specifically identified as one of the reasons for dismissal of the appeal. The current appeal proposal was relocated 400mm back from the lane as part of the application process, and its height reduced by 400mm. None the less, it has an identical footprint and siting to the dismissed appeal scheme and is materially taller (8.1m as opposed to 7.0m above natural ground level) and marginally larger, in terms of gross internal floor area (107 squ metres as opposed to 102 squ metres).

The proposed layout, setting the house at 90 degrees to the existing houses in the road, would be discordant and out of character. The narrow private road has three pairs of semi-detached houses facing south towards the former railway embankment. The introduction of a detached house, set at right angles to the existing dwellings but with a flank elevation only 10 metres from them, would be wholly out of character. While the design is more traditional, the proposed siting remains the principal concern of residents.

We understand that Policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan requires development to enhance the local environment. The intended siting, as agreed by the previous Inspector, would materially harm existing character and cannot be said to enhance it. The fourth criterion of Policy 15 specifically requires development to make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area and to not have an unacceptable impact on adjacent properties, particularly dwellings, including unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight/sunlight, outlook or open amenity space. Here there would be a severe impact upon the outlook of No. 19 which clearly breaches the latter part of this criterion and the discordant layout and orientation cannot reasonably be said to make a positive contribution to local character.

Access, parking and turning:

While it is acknowledged that the previous appeal decision did not refer to residents' representations regarding access, none-the-less they remain a major concern. The response to the application from Highways noted that the private drive serves '4+' dwellings. In fact, it provides vehicular access for seven dwellings at present, eight as proposed, with parking in the front gardens of Nos 13 to 19a, and to the rear of No 21. Parking is only possible in these spaces because the land on the south side of the private road is open and manoeuvring vehicles can over-sail it. Enclosure of a significant section of the lane would lead to parking difficulties for Nos 19, 17a and 17. In addition, in the absence of turning space in the lane, vehicles would be obliged to back out into Victoria Road.

The Highways Authority did not object to the application, but as residents who use the lane daily, we are acutely aware that access from the private lane onto Victoria Road is dangerous. Exiting the lane is literally an act of faith as there is no visibility available to the south until after a car has crossed the pavement and is protruding into the highway. That presents a significant danger, particularly given the use of the road by children accessing Swiss Gardens Primary School nearby. The feedback from Highways comments that there is no evidence that the access is currently operating unsafely, but that evidence does not include near-

misses and emergency braking to avoid collisions. The Inspector is urged to please drive (with great caution) into our lane, turn on site and drive out, so as to fully appreciate the difficulties. Anybody undertaking the manoeuvre would immediately see that the access is dangerous and adding an additional dwelling and associated car movements would only make it worse. We understand that the response from Highways was made without the benefit of a site visit and given their underestimate of the number of dwellings served by the lane, we feel strongly that the highway safety issues here have not been properly considered. They are severe, and the Inspector is urged to give them careful consideration, despite the absence of Highways' objection.

Conditions:

We understand that details of how the construction could proceed, if permitted, could be dealt with by a condition requiring a Construction Management Plan to be agreed with the council. This would only be appropriate, though, if there was a reasonable prospect of a satisfactory plan being devised. Vehicles any bigger than a large van would struggle to access the private drive from Victoria Road. Loading and unloading equipment and materials in Victoria Road risks conflicts with pedestrians, in particular school children, accessing Swiss Gardens Primary School just 100 metres to the north. Such construction vehicles as could gain access would not be able to turn on-site, necessitating backing out into the road. In addition, it is unclear how the proposed dwelling could be constructed without significant disruption and inconvenience to adjacent dwellings, in particular blocking access. Construction within the bounds of the site would present a further challenge, given the close proximity of the building to the site boundaries. In short, we do not consider that construction of a new dwelling here would be either practical or safe.

Conclusions:

It is the opinion of local residents in the lane that a new dwelling in this location would be out of character and harmful. Also, this location is too constrained and too poorly accessed to be able to satisfactorily accommodate the proposed dwelling. Our concerns regarding siting and local character were shared by the previous Inspector and we therefore urge the Inspector now to dismiss this appeal.