Duncan 55 Ring Road

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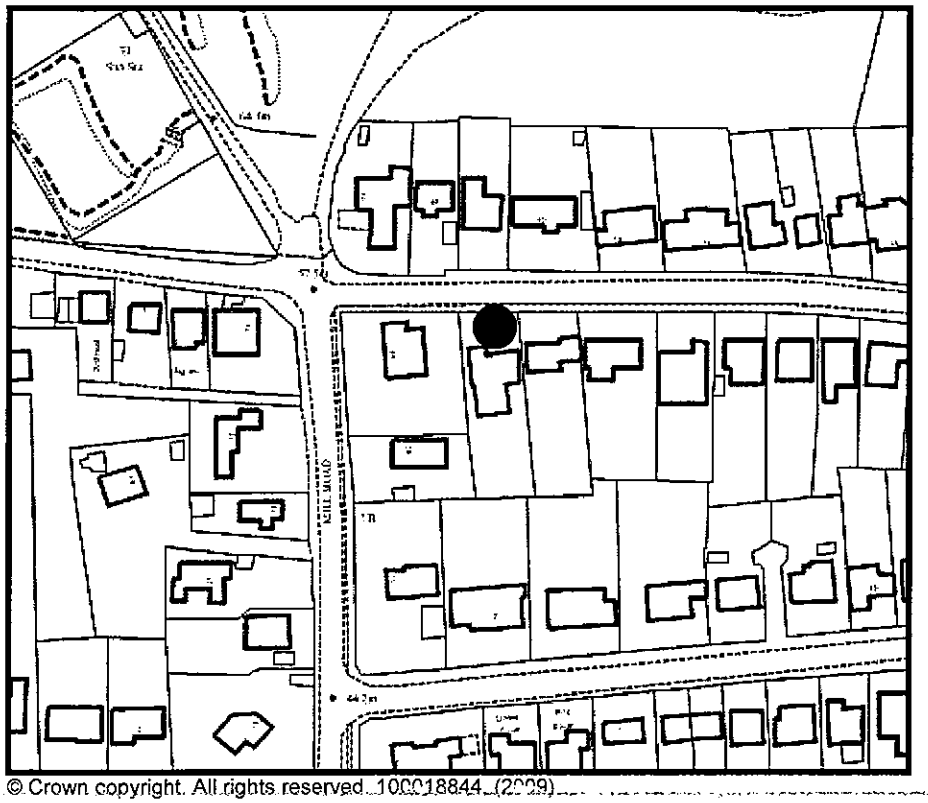
Application Number: ADC/0388/09 Recommendation - APPROVE

Site: **57 Ring Road, Lancing BN15 0QE**

Proposal: **Pitch-roofed front extension (garage) and conversion of existing garage to a study/bedroom with roof alteration**



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The Application

The application relates to a split-level detached dwelling located on the south side of the upper part of Ring Road. It has the appearance of a bungalow from the road and has been extended to the rear with a substantial two-storey extension and raised patio (L/54/99). As a result of the hillside location, the site steeply slopes down to the south (rear), with dwellings on the opposite side of the road (to the north) being on a much higher ground level. The site is well screened from the road by some trees, including a pine subject to TPO 162/1/62(L), and there are other trees subject to the TPO on the frontage of No.55 to the east.

The proposals are for a pitch-roofed front extension forming a double garage, plus internal alterations to enable the conversion of the existing integral garage into a study/bedroom, including modification to its projecting roof. The proposed projecting new front garage has been amended in design after discussions with officers regarding scale and height.
The proposals also include a new front boundary treatment with a proposed new front wall (0.6m high plus 0.9m high railings, with 1.5m high piers), and a 1.5m high pair of entrance gates.

The front extension, as amended, would now have a fully hipped roof of matching concrete tiles, with brick-built side walls. It would be 5.9m wide, by 5.8m deep, by 4.5m high to the

ridge of the roof (and side walls 2.2m high). Access to the garage would be from the existing sloping driveway from the west of the site.
The existing garage to be converted to a room would incorporate a new front window to match existing windows and have a small hipped roof 1.2m high of similar style to the proposed new garage roof.

Directly to the east is No. 55, a two-storey house sited forward of the applicant's dwelling by 2m. It is also below road level and screened well by the trees subject to TPO.

Consultations and Representations

Lancing Parish Council: No objections.

Third Parties: 10 letters/emails of objection have been received.

The residents of No.55 Ring Road, directly to the east, object because they feel the proposals would cause an unacceptable loss of light, particularly as there property is already deeply shaded at the front; cause overlooking at the front; are a gross overdevelopment of the site which is out of keeping; and cause uncertainty regarding the void roof areas.

The resident of No.64 Mill Road, adjacent to the west, states that he feels the proposals are very large and they would project forward of the building line; the loss of mature trees and much of the front garden will affect the appearance and character of the area; and the windows on the first floor which face west will result in loss of privacy.

The others are 8 identical letters which have been received from residents of No's 45, 52, 60 & 62 Ring Road and No.66 Mill Road and from residents at a property elsewhere in Lancing (No.228 Brighton Road). The objections are:-

- Extension is too long and too wide and is overdevelopment of the site;
- Projects forward of the 'building line' and is too close to the footway;
- Out of character with North Lancing which comprises detached dwellings with open front gardens;
- Sets a precedent;
- Loss of wildlife and reduced rainfall catchment footprint;
- Loss of trees not compensated for by low level shrubs;
- Previous refusal for a roof extension at No.64.

Concerns are also raised that the plans fail to incorporate the rear extension and west side lean-to, that the roof voids could be converted in en-suite bathrooms, and the block plan does not accurately show the position of the garage in relation to the highway.

NB. Re-notification of all the neighbours and objectors has taken place as a result of the receipt of amended plans. This has so far resulted in 3 emails from the residents of No's 55 & 62 Ring Road stating that these new plans change nothing of substance and their objections still stand.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AB23, AB25, AH7 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings.'

PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
'Tree Preservation Orders: A Guide to the Law and Good Practice' (DETR 2000)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, a loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. They should be of sympathetic design and materials to the original dwelling and the area in general and accord with the Council's DC standards.

The Council's Development Control Standard No.3 entitled 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' states that front extensions are particularly difficult to incorporate successfully with existing dwellings. It states they should not extend significantly beyond the 'building line' or abut side boundaries. In the case of semi-detached or detached dwellings, front extensions will only be allowed where the extension can be successfully assimilated into the streetscene and not unduly affect neighbours. In respect of garages attached to dwellings, it states that they should be in sympathy with the design and scale of the dwelling concerned.

Government policy is set out in Planning Policy Statement PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'. Relevant paragraphs are 17, which refers to the commitment to protecting and improving the environment; 18 which 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; and 34 which states that good design is indivisible from good planning and that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, should not be accepted.

Visual amenity

Given that the site is well screened from the road and below road level and that the proposed garage, as amended, would be set back 5.5m from the front boundary and of sympathetic design and scale, it is not considered that the proposals would be out of character with the area or detrimental to visual amenity.

The surrounding locality is characterised mainly by relatively large detached houses and bungalows. Due to the steeply sloping location, the majority of the dwellings on the north side of the road are on significantly higher ground level that those to the south. The variety of house types and ages results in there being no defined architectural character or dominant style.

The existing dwelling at No.57 is well screened from the road by the trees subject to group TPO and by other garden shrubs and conifers not subject to specific protection both on and adjoining the site. With its siting 1.1m below road level, it is relatively inconspicuous, especially as it is set further back (10m) from the highway than most of the other dwellings on the south side of the road.

The proposed extension would also be relatively obscured from view. In reducing the depth of the extension, the applicants intend to retain all of the front boundary planting, which will aid the screening of the proposals.
The design of the garage extension is not considered to be out of keeping with the design of the existing dwelling, with its tiled roof and brick wall construction. There has been a reduction in the overall dimensions of the garage by 0.4m in width, 0.95m in depth and by 0.5m in height, and consequently the extension would be a further 0.5m from the road, leaving a set back of 5.5m which would be similar to other dwellings further to the east. It is considered that the reduction helps to prevent the extension from appearing overly wide in relation to the original bungalow.

As to whether the proposal is overdevelopment, the total site area is 750sqm (15.4m wide and 49m deep). The total area to be taken up by the proposed extension is 34sqm, increasing the total ground coverage of the dwelling from 181sqm (24% of the total site area) to 215sqm (29%). Whilst this may be a higher ground coverage than other properties in the vicinity, the extension represents only a 15% increase in footprint of the dwelling and it is not considered that it results in overdevelopment of the site. The rear garden, which is unaffected, is over 3 times the Council's minimum size.

The proposed boundary wall, railings and gates, with an overall height of 1.5m (as compared to the 'permitted development' limit of 1m), would have a direct effect on the streetscene. However, the design with railings between the piers would allow a view of shrubs behind. On balance, taking account of solid brick walls of similar height on the frontages of No's 51 & 53 a short distance further east, it is considered it would not be excessively prominent. Care needs to be taken in its construction so as not to harm the roots of the protected pine tree, but it would be in the same position as the existing low brick wall and corner pier.

Residential amenity

No.55, to the east, is a two-storey house also set below road level and sited at a slightly oblique angle to the road. It is 2 metres in front of the applicant's dwelling and about 1m from the side boundary.

It has a small study at groundfloor level, served by a window at the front. Due to the study being on the northwest corner of the dwelling, it currently gets no direct sunlight and has poor natural daylighting, largely owing to the trees subject to TPO which are mostly located on the northern boundary. The proposed garage extension would be located about 2.5m west of this study window and would project 3.8m further forward. The extension would have some effect on daylighting to the study but not to an excessive degree taking account of the amendment from a part gabled to a fully hipped roof which has now lessened the bulk. Given the type of room involved, with the main living rooms of No.55 being unaffected, it is considered that the proposed garage as amended would not result in a loss of residential amenity to a degree warranting refusal.

There would be no loss of privacy to any neighbouring properties. Conversion of the roof space above the garage for any purpose other than storage is unlikely owing to the very limited headroom. A condition can be imposed to control any future rooflights or windows in the east side to avoid any risk of loss of privacy to the neighbours.

Trees

The TPO 162/1/62(L) was made in 1962 when the two dwellings were permitted. The application site along with No.55 to the east had originally been part of the rear garden of No.64 Mill Road to the west. A significant number of trees along the north boundary were made subject to a TPO (plus others adjoining Mill Road) but only one is in the front garden of the application site. This is a large Corsican pine which is to be retained, although care needs to be exercised in constructing the proposed front wall and gates as this tree directly abuts them.

The amended plan shows the retention of all of the existing trees and shrubs in the front border to keep the current well screened appearance of the site (NB. 2 of these were originally proposed to be removed). The only ones now to be removed are 3 conifers (2 of which appear dead or dying) growing directly against the front of the dwelling itself. There would be no material loss of wildlife habitat.

Access

The proposed garage would be sited on the existing hardstanding and utilise the existing site access. There would be no effect on highway safety. The garage and driveway are below the level of the road, thus any surface water run-off would not flow onto the road.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed development would not detract from the local environment and can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. Subject to adequate precautions, it would not cause harm to the tree subject to TPO. It would consequently not conflict with the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AB25, AH7)

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)
2. C11D (Protection of existing trees) (amended)
3. C14Aii (Permission relates to amended plans received on 8 November 2009)
4. C12Eii (External walls and roof of extension and alteration to match existing) (amended)
5. C18Eiv (No windows or rooflights to be formed in the east side wall or roof slope of the extension without planning permission)

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