Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1079/11 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 2 Brighton Road, Lancing BN15 8RH

Proposal: West side extension plus rooms in roof (including rear dormer with balcony) and vehicular access

The Application

The proposal is for a single-storey hip-roofed extension (with roofspace accommodation) on the west side of the existing hip-roofed single-storey bungalow. It is known as 'Music Room House' because of its original design for such purposes (with a domed ceiling, now to be removed) when it was part of the adjacent larger mock-Tudor house 'Nanette' at No.4 (to which it is physically attached but now in separate ownership). The proposed extension involves extending the plot 4.6m westwards beyond the existing garden wall onto a small part of the adjacent temporary car park (serving Drumconner Nursing Home) on the beach (NB. this car park is now unauthorised owing to the expiry of the temporary permission). The present applicant has already acquired the small piece of extra land needed to build the proposed extension.

A previous application for a contemporary two-storey extension (AWDM/0129/11) was refused and dismissed on appeal on the ground that:-

1. *The architectural form, design and materials of the proposed extension would be incongruous with the existing bungalow and the group of distinctive dwellinghouses at No's 2-8 Brighton Road and, owing to its prominence in the streetscene, it would be excessively harmful to the visual amenities of the locality, contrary to policy AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan and PPS1.*

The extension now proposed would be 4.5m wide (instead of 5m) and 7.5m deep (the same as before) including a front roof overhang. In front (and partly beneath the roof) would be a hardstanding for a car, served by a new access (4.5m wide). The ground floor would have an entrance hall and small 'snugroom' and the first floor would comprise access stairs and landing to a bedroom and shower room in the roofspace of the existing bungalow. This involves a small rear dormer with an external rear balcony.
The existing bungalow has an eaves height of 2.3m at the side and 3.3m at the front, with an overall roof height of 6.5m. The proposed extension has the same eaves height and an overall ridge height of 5.7m. It would have rendered walls and roof tiles to match the existing bungalow. There would be a new west side boundary wall (details not provided).The rendering on the front of the existing bungalow has been removed and will be rendered over. The west side wall appears to be in urgent need of attention as it is leaning outwards and supported by temporary timber posts.

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: Commented on the previous application that an on-site turning area would be preferred but there is insufficient space for this. Bearing in mind the general desirability of reducing on-street parking and existence of other properties with no on-site turning along the A259, considered refusal is not warranted. Reiterates this on the latest application but adds that the access needs to be in bound material (not gravel as stated on the plan) and suitable drainage to

prevent water running onto the highway. A condition securing the new access is recommended.

Environment Agency: No objection provided a condition is imposed requiring submission and approval, prior to development commencing, of a scheme to ensure access to and protection of existing flood defences and requiring it to be implemented within an agreed timescale. Comment that it is important that ground investigation is carried out prior to development in order to establish if parts of the sea defence are buried within the shingle beach, as these will need to be retained and not damaged. State this is needed to comply with PPS25.

Lancing Parish Council: Objects on grounds that the proposal is overdevelopment of the site and the loss of beach would be detrimental to the area (NB. no objection was received to the previous application).

Third Parties: 3 letters/emails have been received.
The resident of No.4 Brighton Rd is neutral about the proposal provided a condition is imposed requiring the east side dormer window (showerroom) to be obscure-glazed to retain privacy to his nearest room.
The resident of flat 23 Milford Court states that he can see nothing to object to in this application provided the adjacent Drumconner temporary car park and its access are removed.
The resident of flat 49 Milford Court refers to previous refusals of building on this open land between No.2 and the beach huts to the west and, if the objections have been relaxed (including by the Environment Agency), he will apply to build on the land (which he jointly owns) to the west of the car park. He refers to chaos in summer caused by cars driving and parking on pavements.
[NB. the adjacent car park serving Drumconner is not the responsibility of the present applicant other than for the small part 4.6m wide which he has acquired to build the extension]

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, 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)
PPS25 'Development and Flood Risk' (ODPM 2006) and PPS25 Supplement 'Development and Coastal Change' (DCLG 2010)

Planning Assessment

Policies

In the Adur District Local Plan, the site (to a depth of approximately 12m) is located within the built-up area boundary. This definition of the built-up area stretches westwards to include the row of beach huts (as far as the Worthing boundary). Under policy AG1, in principle, development is normally permitted within the built-up area boundary "*subject to other policies in this Local Plan and to it not detracting from the existing local urban environment*". The strip at the rear is shown in the Local Plan as part of the beach and is subject to policies AR2 and AR12 (prevention of non-recreational use and encouragement to owners to make these areas available to the public to use as open space with improvements to public facilities).

As stated above, the undeveloped frontage west of the existing bungalow at No.2 is included within the built-up area as defined in the Local Plan. However, in refusing an application for a dwelling on this land in 2007 (ADC/0177/07) and also in 2004, the view was taken that the proposed building was unacceptable because of the loss it would cause to part of the undeveloped beach. Undeveloped beach frontage is a scarce asset within the District and it was considered that it should be retained as a recreational area of benefit to a large number of people and of significant public importance, also because the view is enjoyed not only by those who live opposite and adjacent to the site but also by passing motorists, cyclists and walkers. The car park that now exists on this area has been permitted only on a temporary basis as a staff car park whilst extensions that have been permitted to the nearby Drumconner Nursing Home are built.
The extension now proposed would, in terms of ground coverage, be much less harmful to the open beach frontage than the separate dwelling previously proposed in 2007. On this aspect, the previous appeal Inspector stated "*The Council has previously refused a proposal for a larger detached separate dwelling on the site – Although I do not have the details of that proposal, I understand that the footprint of the proposed extension would be smaller and could therefore be less harmful to the beach frontage. However, the critical features that affect the character and appearance of the area are the height and roof form of the proposed extension – the reduction in size of the footprint of the building is therefore insufficient to overcome the previous reason for refusing permission for a development of the site.*" As stated above, the present proposal only involves a 4.6m wide by 12m deep enlargement of the residential plot (in order to build a 4.5m wide extension). It is much smaller than the previously-refused proposal for a house which involved a 14m wide by 25m deep plot (in order to build a 12m wide three-storey house). It is not considered that approval of the present small-scale extension to the existing dwelling would set a precedent for approving the erection of a separate dwelling on the open land to the west (currently partly occupied by the unauthorised car park).

As regards extensions and alterations to existing dwellings, policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that they will be expected to be designed so as "*design and materials are sympathetic to both the original dwelling and the area in general* and so that they do not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on nearby dwellings; do not take an excessive proportion of garden area; have acceptable access and parking provision; and accord with the Council's adopted standards.

The latter comprises the Council's Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'. This was subject to the same consultation process as the Local Plan and forms Appendix 11 to the Local Plan. It states that, in respect of appearance, "*the most important basic principle is that any extension should be in keeping with the appearance, scale, design and character of both the existing dwelling and streetscene generally.....in particular, the proposal should not be allowed to overdominate the house or clash with its appearance*". It adds that "*Extensions should respect the architectural period and style of the existing dwelling and the area. External construction materials should match in colour and texture the materials of the existing dwelling. Windows and other openings should be in scale with the extension and should be in line with and match the proportions and style of existing windows.*" For side extensions, it states "*Side extensions being clearly visible from the road should be designed to closely match the existing dwelling. In particular they should have a roof in keeping with the existing dwelling.....the extension should usually be set back slightly from the main front wall of the dwelling to create a visual break and ensure the extension is subordinate to the main dwelling and to avoid difficulty in matching wall and roof materials.*"

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

As stated above, the bungalow was originally part of the much larger neighbouring house to the east at No.4 known as 'Nanette'. This house, together with 'Boleyn' at No.6 and No.8, form one of the few distinctive groups of buildings on the Lancing seafront. They are most noteworthy for their projecting half-timbered gables and steeply pitched tiled roofs, in a quirky mock-Tudor style, and clearly the original architect paid attention to their detailed design. The bungalow is designed in sympathy with these houses and, overall, there is a harmonious composition of relatively distinctive buildings, albeit that other buildings in the locality are totally different in both scale and style.

The site is extremely prominent when approaching along the heavily-trafficked A259 from the west on account of the fact that the bungalow adjoins the gap of open beach frontage before the line of beach huts starts further west. The site is characterised in the view from the west by the series of tiled roofs sloping down to a very low level.

Various alternative designs were prepared by the applicant's previous architect but none of these alternatives was in keeping with the design of the existing building and most were incongruous, leading to the conclusion that a two-storey extension to this single-storey bungalow in such a prominent location is unacceptable in principle.

By contrast, the design of the extension now proposed is in keeping with the form, style and materials of the existing hip-roofed bungalow and with the group of distinctive dwellinghouses at No's 2-8 Brighton Road. Whilst the front overhanging roof would benefit visually from a corner support, this would interfere with the proposed parking space. Overall, the proposed extension would be not be harmful to the visual amenities of the locality. It preserves the distinctive character of tiled roofs diminishing to a low level beside this gap of beach frontage.

Residential amenity

The proposal does not affect privacy, daylighting or other aspects of living conditions for other dwellings provided a condition is imposed requiring the obscure glazing of the east side shower-room dormer window (as shown on the plan) to be installed and retained.

In terms of the residential amenities of the bungalow itself on the application site, the Council's DC standard normally requires a minimum of 50sqm of rear garden area for a two-bedroom dwelling. In this instance, the existing two-bedroom bungalow has no rear garden or any other external amenity space apart from a narrow strip (0.8m-1.6m wide) around the building. Although the size of the plot is proposed to be extended, it would be mostly occupied by the proposed extension and hardstanding for a car. Consequently, the proposal makes the proportion of external amenity space

relative to the size of the dwelling slightly more deficient than is currently the case. However, the existence of the neighbouring beach and proposed rear balcony help offset this deficiency and this was accepted by the previous appeal Inspector.

Highway safety

Although an on-site turning area is desirable for safety reasons, owing to the impracticality of this, WSCC did not raise an objection to the formation of the proposed access or the parking space at the time of the previous application and this is reiterated. They recommend a condition securing the access, and refer to the need for bound material (not gravel) for the access and drainage avoiding run-off onto the highway.

In addition to this, provision of visibility of pedestrians and cyclists is needed and this can be required by condition.

Flood risk

Although the site is of sufficient height above sea level to be just outside the flood risk area (zones 2 and 3), being on the seafront there is a concern about tidal overtopping in extreme storm conditions and about shingle drift, hence the applicant was required to submit an FRA (with the previous application). The EA-maintained raised shingle beach effectively forms the sea defences and groynes exist to help reduce the eastward longshore drift of shingle. The private sea wall at the rear of the property is to be extended westwards and this, combined with the low-lying gap of shingle behind the main crest of the beach, is stated in the applicant's consultant's FRA to provide some protection against shingle drift and whitewater inundation. The extension meets EA requirements as it will be no further seaward than the existing building and be at the same floor level as the existing bungalow (5.95mAOD as compared to the minimum requirement of 5.3mAOD). However, to comply with PPS25, the EA require a condition to be imposed on any permission requiring submission and approval, prior to development commencing, of a scheme to ensure access to and protection of existing flood defences and requiring it to be implemented within an agreed timescale. They state it is important that ground investigation is carried out prior to development in order to establish if parts of the sea defence are buried within the shingle beach, as these will need to be retained and not damaged.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

1PPii (amended) The proposed development would not detract from the local environment and can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of nearby properties and without unacceptable flood risk or detraction from highway safety. It consequently does not conflict with the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7), PPS1 and PPS25.

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci
2. C12E3 (amended) The roof tiling hereby permitted shall match the existing roof tiling and the walls shall be rendered and painted together with those of the existing bungalow prior to occupation of the extension. R. ....AH7...

3. C18B (amended) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the dwelling as hereby permitted to be enlarged shall not be further extended or any incidental building erected. R. .....AH7.....
4. C18Ci The east side dormer window hereby ..... R. AH7
5. C7Ci (amended) Prior to commencement of work, details of the west side boundary wall and the alterations to the front boundary wall, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA and they shall only be constructed in accordance with such details as approved under this condition. R. .....AH7.....
6. C9F (amended) The access shall not exceed 4.5m in width and, together with the hardstanding, shall be constructed of bound material (not gravel) with drainage provision that avoids runoff onto the highway. Any walls, fences or other structures within 2m of the sides of the access or within 2m from its junction with the public highway shall not exceed 0.6m in height.
7. Prior to development commencing, a scheme to ensure access to and protection of existing flood defences shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA and any works required shall be completed within a timescale to be approved as part of the scheme. The scheme shall be based on a ground investigation carried out prior to development in order to establish if parts of the sea defence are buried within the shingle beach. R. To ensure the integrity of the sea defences is maintained.
8. C1Ei The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans received on 15 December 2011:-
Site Plan; Block Plan as Proposed; Proposed Floor Plans (Dwg No.3); and Proposed Elevations (Dwg No.4).

Informative

No use of vehicular access until satisfactory kerb and pavement crossing.....

Case Officer: Keith Morgan

Date: 17 January 2012