Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0681/17 Recommendation – Refuse

Site: 13 Manor Hall Road, Southwick

Proposal: Front extension and conversion of 3 no. bedroom bungalow into 1x 2 no. bedroom and 1x 3 no. bedroom dwellings. Construction of vehicular access and hardstanding to front.

Date of site visit: 5 July 2017

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site is a detached bungalow located on the north side of Manor Hall Road, Southwick on a corner plot with Milton Drive. The bungalow was extended under SW/6/02/TP with front and rear extensions and side dormers incorporating a granny annexe. To the rear a detached garage is accessed off Milton Drive. As the property is sited on a corner plot it has a large front garden that extends around to the east and rear. The property is bounded to the north and west by further detached and semi-detached bungalows of similar age.

This proposal seeks permission to extend the property in order that it can be converted into two flats (one 2-bed and one 3-bed). The extension would be to the front, 'squaring off' the frontage with an infill pitched roof extension on the south east corner.

Access to flat 1 will be via an existing door on the west side with flat 2 accessed via an existing rear door. A dropped kerb is to be installed off Manor Hall Road to incorporate a hardstanding at the front of the property for 1 vehicle. The applicant has confirmed that the front flat will use this space with the existing garage and drive at the rear reserved for the use of the rear flat.

Flat 1 will incorporate the front of the building on the ground floor, including the proposed extension which will provide a second bedroom. Flat 2 will incorporate the rear of the building and the rooms within the roofspace.

Relevant site history

SW/6/02 – Rear Extn (Part Hipped Roof/Part Flat Roof) & Rooms In Roof Space With E & W Side Dormers; Front Hip-Roofed Extn (To Provide Annex For Elderly Relative) – approved subject to condition that accommodation permitted was occupied incidental to the property as a whole and not as a separate unit of accommodation.

ADC/0680/07 – Conversion into 3 flats (2 two-bed and 1 three-bed) with east side/front extension and enlarged hipped roof with dormer windows in rear and east and west sides – refused for the reasons:

1. *The proposals would be out of keeping in scale and design with the existing dwellings and would be detrimental to the visual amenities and residential environment of the locality and, if permitted, the Local Planning Authority would find it difficult to resist further similar proposals related to other dwellings in the road, the cumulative effect of which would be to spoil the character and appearance of the area, contrary to the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7)*

2. *Having regard to the limited size and type of property involved, its conversion into 3 flats would give rise to an over intensive use of the site and an unsatisfactory standard of residential amenity for the occupiers. The proposal would therefore be detrimental to the residential environment of the locality, contrary to the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (CH1, DEV1) and the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH9).*

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highway Officer** has no objection. Comments that one off-street parking space is to be created within a new hardstanding area on the site frontage and allocated to the 2 bedroom dwelling. The existing driveway and garage to the rear is to be allocated to the 3 bedroom dwelling. This gives a total of 3 spaces for the development which is in accordance with the WSCC Parking Demand Calculator.

The Area Highway Engineer has confirmed that he would have no objection to the proposed new vehicle crossover (VCO) onto Manor Hall Road. The dropped crossing must be implemented under licence to a specification obtained from WSCC Highways.

In conclusion, it is not anticipated that the proposal will be detrimental to highway safety therefore the LHA does not wish to raise any objections.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The ***Environmental Health*** Officer advises that the new layout places the lounge of one property adjacent to the bedroom of another. She has concerns about noise transmission between these dissimilar rooms which is likely to lead to loss of amenity and noise complaints. She recommends that thought is given to rearranging the layout to avoid dissimilar rooms being placed next to each other.

If changing the layout is not possible she advises that sound insulation testing should be carried out between all dissimilar rooms to confirm compliance with Approved Document E specifications before occupation.

The ***Private Sector Housing*** Officer comments that the main access for the two bedroom property is through the kitchen which is a high fire risk area and makes all habitable rooms inner rooms. He notes that the lounge has double doors to the outside, but the risk in the bedrooms can be mitigated by ensuring that the windows comply with fire escape window requirements.

Similarly, although the layout of the proposed three-bedroom flat mirrors the existing access arrangements, the only means of escape for most rooms

(including the first floor bedrooms) is through the high risk kitchen-lounge. This risk could best be mitigated by creating a new doorway to the outside from the new hallway.

The ***Drainage Engineer*** advises that the car parking area should be drained to soakaway and not allowed to discharge flows to the highway.

Southern Water: Request usual informatives

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH5, AH7, AH9 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions'
Submission Adur Local Plan (2016) Policy 15, 21
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Planning Assessment

Density, Character and Appearance

The western section of Manor Hall Road, including this site, is dominated by 1930's detached and semi-detached bungalows, many of which have added small rear extensions. This consistency of built form continues around into Milton Drive. To the east Manor Hall Road begins to fragment into patches of terraced and semi-detached houses inconsistent in both form and age. Although some single flats are located above the shops on The Broadway immediately east, these are as built. There have been no flat conversions in the area.

The existing bungalow is a four bedroom bungalow with a floor area greater than 100 square metres and thus does not fall into the category of a small family house as defined in the Council's DC Standard No.4. It currently provides a good sized family dwelling with appropriate amenity space within an area of similar housing stock. The conversion into two flats will remove this family dwelling and raise the density of the site.

The extension itself would be out of character with other bungalows in the street which all have an L-shape at the front. However, it is not considered that sufficient visual harm will arise to warrant refusal of the application on this aspect.

However, the conversion of the dwelling into two flats would be out of character with the area, which is dominated by family dwellings similar in scale and appearance to this one. It would also set an unfortunate precedent for future conversions. For these reasons it is considered that the proposal constitutes an overdevelopment of the site which would not respect the current mix of dwellings in the area, contrary to policy 21 of the Submission Adur Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

The proposal will not have a direct impact on light or outlook for neighbouring residents. However, the additional activity associated with two dwellings rather than one is likely to have some impact on the amenities of the bungalow to the east, No.11.

The floor area of Flat 1 would be approximately 53sqm which falls short of the 57sqm specified in the DC Standard and the 61sqm in the National Housing Standards. Flat 2 would have a larger floor area of in excess of 96sqm and would comply with space standards. However, the rooms are not well arranged internally with a ground floor bedroom of Flat 2 adjacent to the lounge of Flat 1 and the upper floor bedroom in Flat 2 also partly above the lounge of Flat 1. The Council's Environmental Health Officer is concerned that the layout will cause potential noise disturbances.

A reasonably sized and private rear garden will be retained for Flat 2 and Flat 1 will have a smaller garden area at the side of the building. Both are considered to be adequate. However, the intensification of use of the building, the substandard floor area of Flat 1 and the poor internal room arrangement demonstrate that the proposal would give rise to an over intensive use of the site and an unsatisfactory standard of residential amenity for the occupiers, to the detriment of the residential environment of the locality.

Access and Parking

The proposal includes a new hardstanding at the front accessed off Manor Hall Road to serve Flat 1. The rear garage is to be retained for Flat 2. No highway objections have been raised in respect of this arrangement.

Recommendation

REFUSE, for the following reason:

The conversion of the existing bungalow into 2 flats would give rise to an over intensive use of the site and an unsatisfactory standard of residential amenity for the future occupiers. The proposal would also be in conflict with the predominant character and mix of dwellings in the area and could set an unfortunate precedent for future similar conversions, the cumulative effect of which would be to spoil the character and appearance of the area, contrary to saved policies AG1 and AH9 of the Adur District Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions', policy 21 of the Submission Adur Local Plan and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, allowing the Applicant the opportunity to

consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 29 August 2017

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 30 August 2017