Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0380/17 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 6 Rooksacre Cottages, West Street, Sompting

Proposal: First-floor side extension to east elevation.

Date of site visit: 15.09.2016 and 01.06.2017 to Trelawny's Cottage (by RT)

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site Surroundings and Proposal

The application site is located on the northerly side of West Street and forms a two storey end of terrace property within a row of three terrace properties comprising 3, 4-5 and 6 Rooksacre Cottages. The property is one of the smallest of the three properties and has been previously extended with a single storey garage and link extension to the eastern side of the property.

The site is located within the Sompting Conservation Area. This section of the road is characterised by a mixture of large detached two storey properties and two storey terrace properties and flint/mortar walls along property frontages.

The proposal seeks planning permission for a first floor extension to the eastern side of the property over the existing single storey hipped-roof garage and flat-roofed link extension. The proposed extension would measure 5.4 metres in width and a maximum 8.2 metres in depth. It would be linked to the existing dwelling by a new pitched roof with a ridge positioned 0.8m below the existing main roof ridge extending eastwards by 5.3m. A further ridge set 0.5m below this and 4.8m long positioned at 90º to the main ridge would terminate in hipped gables to the north and south. The proposed extension would have a maximum height of 7 metres with the N-S ridge 6.5m high. The external walls would consist of a smooth rendered finish with a slate roof to match the original property. The extension would provide two additional bedrooms and an en-suite bathroom at the first floor level.

This application follows previously refused application AWDM/1330/16 for a first floor extension to the eastern side of the property which was also subsequently dismissed at appeal. The main change between this application and the previous application is the proposed roof design. The previous application AWDM/1330/16 incorporated a flat roofed first floor extension linking the existing dwelling to the proposed pitched roof gable extension over the existing single storey garage. This application proposes a pitched roof to first floor extension above the entrance door of the property.

Relevant Planning History

AWDM/1330/16 First-floor side extension to east elevation. Refused Oct 2016 on the following grounds:-

1. The proposal is unacceptable in that the scale, design and appearance of the proposed first floor side extension would be unsympathetic to the proportion of the terrace property and the group of terrace properties comprising 3, 4-5 and 6 Rooksacre Cottages. The proposed extension would appear prominent when viewed from West Street to the south and would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to saved policies AB4 and AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan and the NPPF.

Consultations:

The **Adur Conservation Area Advisory Group** has raised no objection to this application.

Sompting Parish Council support this application.

Southern Water have raised no objection to the application yet have asked for informatives relating to SW approval to the public sewerage system to be added to any recommendation for approval.

Representations:

One letter of objection has been received from the occupier of Trelawny's Cottage to the east of the application property. The neighbouring occupier considers that the proposed extension would comprise overdevelopment, would not be in keeping with the rest of Rooksacre Cottages and would affect the natural light to their kitchen/diner, entrance hall and two upstairs bedrooms.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AB4, AH7 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising:
Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012).

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

Previous application AWDM/1330/16 similarly sought planning permission for a first floor side extension over the existing single storey garage and entrance porch. In considering the principle of the first floor extension under this previous application Council Officers considered:

"Whilst the first floor extension would extend over an existing single storey structure, it is considered that a first floor extension of this width would be

significantly more prominent and out of keeping with the modest proportions of this end of terrace property. The proposed extension would be set back from the front wall of the original property, yet the sizable width and lower flat roof link design would not remain in keeping with the scale, design or appearance of the original dwelling or the group of properties from the street scene perspective."

The application was subsequently refused by the Council as the scale, design and appearance of the proposed first floor side extension was considered to be unsympathetic to the proportions of the terraced house and the group of terrace properties comprising 3, 4-5 and 6 Rooksacre Cottages. The proposed extension would have also appeared prominent when viewed from West Street to the south and it was considered would detract from the character and appearance of the Sompting Conservation Area.

In determining the subsequent appeal the Planning Inspector acknowledged that the group of terrace properties have been subject to a number of changes yet the appeal property retained an attractive appearance with its white rendered walls, slate roofs and 2 distinctive chimneys. In commenting on the design of the appeal proposed the Inspector commented:-

"There would be no direct connection between the pitched roof of the main house and that of the proposed extension other than by means of a narrow flat roof structure. As such the proposed extension would have the appearance of an awkwardly freestanding element at odds with the character and appearance of the appellants' house and of the terrace as a whole. The extension at the other end of the terrace has a roof form far better integrated into the property to which it is attached. The harm I have found in relation to the proposed development is not lessened by it being of a lower height to the main building and thus subservient to it."

The Planning Inspector dismissed the appeal on the basis that the proposed extension would have detracted from the character and appearance of the surrounding area and highlighted the statutory test that new development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance the Conservation Areas.

The Inspector did not however disregard the principle of a first floor extension to this property and commented that, "*The extension at the other end of the terrace has a roof form far better integrated into the property to which bit is attached."*

Visual Amenity & Impact on the Character & Appearance of the Conservation Area

The previous appeal decision for the proposed first floor extension is a material consideration of and given the similarities between this scheme and the previous scheme and the lack of weight attributed by the Planning Inspector to any other aspect of the design of the proposed first-floor extension, the change in roof form is the main issue to be considered in respect of its visual impact in relation to the host dwelling and on the character of the area.

The current proposals which now incorporate a pitched–roof link would integrate more sympathetically with the appearance of the host dwelling with the ridges of the various elements stepping down in height to maintain a subservient visual relationship. Officers remain of the view that the overall scale and width of the extension at 2-storeys would be at odds with the very modest proportions of the original end-of-terrace cottage, but as the Inspector attributed no significant weight to this argument in dismissing the earlier appeal, it would be perverse to refuse the latest application on this ground.

The roof design of the proposed first-floor extension would be more sympathetic to the appearance of the original dwelling and as such would safeguard the traditional character and appearance of this row of terraced cottages and the surrounding Conservation Area.

It is worthy of note that Sompting Parish Council and Adur District Conservation Advisory Group (ADCAG) have raised no objection to this latest application.

Residential amenity

The neighbouring occupiers that would be most affected by the proposed extension are located to the west 5-6, Rooksacre Cottages, to the north, 1-2 Rooksacre Cottages and to the east, Trelawneys Cottage.

The first floor extension would extend over the existing garage and would therefore extend some 1.4 metres further northward than the first floor rear wall of the original dwelling. The projecting rear section of the first floor extension would be sited some 7.5m from the first-floor, east-facing window within the rear outrigger of the attached neighbouring property. Given the separation distance it is considered that the proposed extension would be unlikely to cause any harmful loss of light to the rear windows in the westerly neighbouring property. No windows would be incorporated in the easterly side wall of the first floor extension and therefore the proposed extension would cause no loss of amenity to the westerly neighbouring occupiers.

1-2 Rooksacre Cottages occupies a ‘backland’ situation to the north and west, having a large plot curtilage which extends to the rear of the application property. The proposed first floor bedroom window within the projecting rear elevation of the proposed extension would be approximately 10 metres from the common boundary. At this distance it is considered that the proposed first floor windows in the rear elevation of the proposed first floor extension would not cause any harmful loss of amenity to the occupiers of that property.

To the east the neighbouring property, Trelawyny’s Cottage, consists of an older, detached, dwelling occupying a generous-sized plot, with an attached annexe. It is notably larger in scale than the adjoining terraced cottages and taller in height. There are two ground floor and two first floor openings in the western side elevation which directly face the existing garage.

The proposed first floor extension would be located approximately 4 metres from the windows in the easterly neighbouring property. The extension would incorporate a total height of 7 metres and would sit lower than the easterly neighbouring property.

In determining the earlier appeal the Inspector commented, "*The neighbour of the adjoining house to the east is concerned tha the proposed development would result in loss of light to his west elevation windows facing onto the appeal site. However, given the distance of the proposed extension from this property, and the absence of any shading diagrams I am not convinced that such harm would result.*"

The occupier of Trelawny's Cottage has made representation that the development would result in severe loss of natural light to the kitchen/living room window and hallway.

The applicant has submitted a daylight report to support the latest proposals. The report assesses the proposals in relation to the guidance contained in 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A Guide to Good Practice (BRE Second Edition). These guidelines do not have any formal status as a planning policy document but are a well-recognised 'rule of thumb' for assessing the impact of new development on the receipt of light to windows in existing buildings. The guideline forms a series of sequential tests. Both ground-floor windows fail Test 2 – the 25 Degree Angle test. [The first-floor windows are all compliant.] The ground-floor rearmost window serving the kitchen/living area complies with the subsequent test, Test 3 – Vertical Sky Component. The windows serving the entrance hall fail Test 3 (and Test 4 – Is the VSC less than 0.8 times the value before the proposed development). The report concludes that the proposed development would have a significant impact on daylight to the windows serving the entrance hall.

However, of key relevance is that the entrance hall does not constitute 'habitable accommodation'. The same weight cannot be attributed to the loss of light affecting the entrance hall as would be the case for a living room, kitchen or bedroom.

It is also worth noting that the kitchen/living area served by the rearmost ground-floor window in this elevation is also served by a small window in the north elevation and therefore has an alternative source of daylight.

Although the proposed development would have a noticeable impact on receipt of daylight to the ground-floor rooms in the west side of Trelawny's Cottage, the effect would not be so unacceptable based on the BRE Guidelines to substantiate refusal on this basis.

There are no windows proposed in the easterly side wall of the proposed extension and therefore there would be no loss of privacy caused to the easterly neighbouring occupiers.

Recommendation

APPROVE with the following conditions:

1. Approved plans
2. Standard 3 Year Time Limit

3. Matching Materials to include natural slate roof
4. Windows shall consist of small-paned, timber, sliding-sashes to match the style and proportions of the existing windows in the building.
5. No First Floor Windows (eastern or western elevations)

Informative

1. Proactive Statement –Approved (No Amendments)
2. SW Informative x 2

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 05.07. 2017

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 5 July 2017