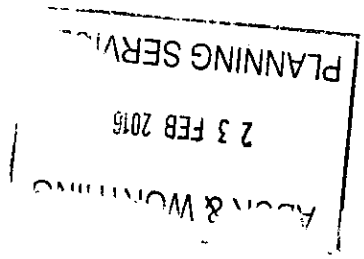
Mr G Peck
Planning Services Manager
Adur & Worthing Councils
Development Management
Economy Directorate
Portland House
44 Richmond Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 1HS



Your Ref: AWDM/1752/15

18 February 2016

Dear Mr Peck,

42 St Julians Lane, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 6EH –
Remove existing garage and garden shed and construct granny annexe and garden office in rear garden

Thank you for your letter dated 4 February 2016 advising us that amended plans have been submitted in respect of the above property.

We would be grateful if you would please consider the following points when making your decision, as unfortunately we continue to have concerns regarding the proposed one bedroom bungalow:

1. Design, Appearance, Materials & Character

Windows and Doors

The amended plans show that the proposed bungalow would now be rendered to match the main property but does not state that the colour would also be the same when painted or whether the window frames and doors would be white, in keeping with the main semi-detached properties, instead of the dark aluminium windows and doors that are similar to a completely different building located further down the road. Any proposed building needs to be in keeping with the main property.

The open frontage and the double doors from the bedroom would impact on the neighbouring property in terms of privacy, noise and disturbance due to the fact that the new building will be totally overlooked. A front door would be far more appropriate and would limit the detrimental effect on the surrounding area.

Solar Panels

The proposed solar panels would not only be unsightly but also not in keeping with the main semi-detached properties, which are two of the oldest properties in the lane or with the surrounding conservation area. To our knowledge, there are no properties with solar panels in St Julians Lane or the immediate vicinity. They are also unacceptable on a single-storey building that would be surrounded by two-storey properties. The fact that the plans show that they are being placed on a single storey bungalow, facing west, means that the neighbouring property will have to look down on them in their entirety and at close proximity.

Whilst we feel that solar panels are wholly inappropriate, when the plans were drawn up, they could have been placed on the east side, where at least they would be far less obtrusive.

It is also not clear from the plans, whether the non-reflective surface against direct sunlight also applies to security lighting at night.

2. Overlooking & Loss of Privacy

The entire west and south sides of the proposed building will be seen by the neighbouring property and therefore the proposed plans show that the interior of the bedroom and open plan kitchen/diner and lounge could potentially be viewed 365 days a year.

The main entrance to the proposed residence will be approximately 14ft wide, which well exceeds the size of any front door of any property in St Julians Lane. As an independent residential property with an interior that is completely visible, the plans should show a main front door in keeping with the main house, as well as all other properties in the lane. This would also mean that day-to-day activities within the property would be kept private from neighbouring properties and in turn, afford the neighbours a greater degree of privacy.

The converted barn, located further down the lane, that the original plans were based on, comprises of a small number of residential properties that all have main front doors. If an independent, self-contained residential bungalow is being proposed, then it needs to be treated as such. Doors opening from the bedroom are unnecessary and inappropriate. A neighbouring property does not want to see into a neighbours' bedroom through an opening that is approximately 5ft wide.

Due to the close proximity and how open the proposed property would be, at present the plans show a 14ft opening at the front of the building, a 5ft opening at the side and windows that are actually bigger than some of the windows in the main property, residents and their visitors will clearly be seen inside the property carrying out their daily activities, such as watching tv, cooking in the kitchen, etc. There are no other residents in the lane that we are aware of that can see into the daily activities of a neighbouring property at such close proximity and in such a direct manner. The residents of the proposed building will also be able to see the neighbours on a much more regular basis than if the buildings were being used for anything other than residential purposes.

3. Noise, Disturbance & Smells

Again, due to the fact that so much of the bungalow is wide open, when the residents of the neighbouring property open their windows or doors or are using their garden, they are going to hear everything within the bungalow, particularly when the retractable doors or the bedroom doors or the large windows are open, on a constant basis. The only noise that the residents of the neighbouring property should hear is purely the noise of neighbours enjoying the use of their garden for recreation purposes and nothing more.

The fact that a permanent residential dwelling is being proposed in the neighbouring back garden in full view and at close proximity without doubt would lead to additional noise and disturbance above and beyond what a neighbour would reasonably expect from a neighbouring garden. Noise from televisions, radios, telephones, use of the kitchen and even general conversations from within the property will be heard, particularly if the retractable doors are wide open.

The disproportionate entrance at the front of the building will also allow smells from the open plan kitchen to drift towards the main house.

4. Additional Information

We would like to draw your attention to the following comments that were made in the design and access statement that was submitted with the original application:

The proposed building is designed specifically to blend in with the original house as well as to be in keeping with the local area.

We do not understand how the plans blend in specifically with the original house. Both sides of the semi-detached property are currently painted in a similar colour with white window frames. The garages to both properties are also of a similar design and colour. Therefore, how can a bungalow with dark aluminium windows and doors, velux windows, solar panels and a completely open frontage be in keeping with the original house. We are also not aware of any house in the local area that has a bungalow located in its back garden.

The development, as a result of the mature foliage and flint wall, is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on any neighbouring properties.

We are astonished by this statement, when it is perfectly clear that in submitting plans to build a permanent residential bungalow located in the back garden in close proximity to the adjoining semi-detached house, that it would have a detrimental effect in terms of noise, disturbance, loss of privacy, etc, when the garden is completely overlooked. There is no flint wall or mature foliage that would obscure the view of the proposed bungalow from the neighbouring property.

Whilst the revised plans are a considerable improvement on the original plans submitted, although the proposed building is still larger than the footprint that will be left should the current garage and shed be demolished, we are still extremely concerned that the plans are for a proposed **residential** property.

This is not a granny annexe but a completely separate one-bedroom bungalow that is being built in the back garden that can be viewed in its entirety by the neighbouring property. Although it would appear that the current garage and shed are not being used by the residents of No 42, their structure and appearance is in keeping with the main building and does not have any detrimental effect on the neighbouring property. This would also be the case even if either of the buildings were in use, as this would be on an occasional basis and most properties in the lane have a garage and it is not unusual to find a home that uses a shed. The problem lies with the fact that the plans are for a property that would be used for residential purposes.

If a replacement garage or shed were to be built on the existing footprint or a summer house that was to be used as an office or for the occasional overnight stay when a friend or relative came to visit and could not be accommodated within the main house but that meals, use of facilities, etc, were conducted within the main residence, this application would not cause a problem because the application would be reasonable and cause a minimum amount of noise and disruption and would not have an impact on the privacy of the neighbouring properties.

The concerns are about building a permanent residence in the back garden to allow additional family members to down size and maintain an independent lifestyle without having to impose on the main home and to have the piece of mind to know that family is close by, as stated in the design and access statement.

Whilst we totally appreciate how important family is and the desire to live close by, particularly to the older generations, the needs stated in the conclusion of the design and access statement can more easily and more appropriately be met in the immediate vicinity

without the need to build a bungalow in the back garden, which would undoubtedly be to the detriment of existing residents.

The current owners of No 42 have already extended their property and if they wanted their parents to move into the main house with them they would be perfectly entitled to do so but to build a bungalow in the back garden for extended family members to move into because they don't want them living in the main house, is not really a reasonable argument when it disadvantages or has a negative impact on the owners of neighbouring properties.

One further important point that we would like to bring to your attention is that like the residents of No 42, who have already extended their main property further into their back garden, should the residents of the neighbouring property also wish to exercise their right to extend their property, this would not be possible to do, as this would bring any extension into a totally unacceptable proximity to the bungalow, which, in turn, would increase the loss of privacy and noise and disturbance further still and to an unacceptable level.

Many owners extend their property and have a right to do so and therefore should we decide to exercise that right, we would want to ensure that those rights remain protected going forward. Currently, we would be able to extend and not be disadvantaged in any way or cause a detrimental impact on any neighbouring property but should the proposed application proceed, then we would be unable to do so.

As mentioned in our previous letter, we live in a peaceful and green environment in a conservation area of historic interest. Although there are neighbours on either side and properties located in the next road that back on to the garden, everyone is afforded a good deal of privacy and peace and quiet and we would wish for that to continue.

Once again, thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment on the amended plans and hope that the above information will be taken into consideration when making your decision on the above planning application.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]