Expiry Date - 20/05/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0402/24 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 27 Alexandra Road Worthing West Sussex BN11 2DU

Proposal: Demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey garage / side extension with front and rear dormers

Date of site visit: 16.04.24

Neighbours checked: y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The site is located to the west side of Alexandra Road within a residential area. The property comprises an end of terrace two storey house with brick, render and tile elevations, with two storey bays with a gable feature above and timber balcony balustrade at first floor. The property is set back from the road with brick and flint wall to the frontage. The property has a drive with parking and a detached prefabricated garage to the south side.

The property is not within a conservation area, is not a listed building and there are no protected trees on site.

Proposal

The application proposes an attached extension to the southern side to comprise a garage at ground floor with room above accessed via an internal staircase within the extension, accessed from the rear. The first floor room would be within the roof space of the extension which would have small dormers to the front and rear.

The extensions would be finished in matching brick, tiles and white timber windows.

The application is a resubmission following a withdrawn application when the applicants were advised that the proposal was unacceptable.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1488/23- Two-storey pitched/flat roof Extension to South side of the property- Withdrawn

Consultations:

Expiry Date - 20/05/2024

WSCC Highways

There are no proposed changes to the access with the publicly maintained highway. From consulting WSCC accident data provided by Sussex Police over a 5 year period, there have been no accidents or personal injury claims at this access to flag any concerns with its current operation.
The proposals state that the existing parking arrangement will be improved with the development, due to the existing substandard garage being too small to park a vehicle.

The proposed garage measures 3.6m x 6.8m internally, however this space also includes an internal staircase which leads to the upper level of the garage. Furthermore some of the space to the rear of the garage may be required for supports and beams associated with the upper floor. Therefore the space available for parking further narrows and falls short of WSCC standards for a single garage, which is 3m x 6m. The existing garage also measures below standard with measurements of 2.8m x 5.5m therefore in this regard the available parking at the site will not change as a result of the proposal.

Within the frontage hardstanding there is space for at least one vehicle. On street parking is available within Alexandra Road, this is subject to a permit. Sufficient space is available within the extra width of the proposed garage to accommodate for cycle parking, this promotes a more sustainable alternative to the use of a car.

The LHA does not consider that the proposal would have a 'severe' impact on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (para 115), and there are no known transport grounds to resist the proposal

Representations:

First Floor Flat 26 Alexandra Road (edited)

I would support an application to demolish it if the replacement was only single storey. However, I object to the two storey application.

In my view a garage similar to 1 Alexandra Road would be acceptable as long as the axis of the pitched roof is East-West.

The applicants previously submitted a similar application (AWDM/1488/23) which was withdrawn. This new application does nothing to overcome the previous objections in terms of loss of light as the supposedly altered height shows no significant change. Therefore, the previous objections are still valid and should be taken into account when making any planning decision based on this application.

The previous application showed a West facing window. This has now been altered to be an East facing window. This proposed window would look directly into our front room which would result in a loss of privacy.

This development would cause loss of light to our front garden (and, therefore, our enjoyment of it)
The development would also cause almost complete loss of light to two of the properties at 23 Alexandra Road on their North facing walls.

In paragraph 1 of the Design and Access Statement it is stated that the design is for "Habitable Office Space". The building regulations have three definitions of habitable (parts B, F and M) none of which refers to office in the definition. Therefore, there is no such thing as "Habitable Office Space". Either the accommodation is habitable or it is an office space it cannot be, by definition, both.

If the accommodation is habitable then it will likely attract an occupier with a car which will increase the number of cars in the area (which is what the applicants allegedly seek to reduce) and will increase the population density in the area (which is already high).

Alexandra Road is a residential road not for business / office use.

If the space is to be used as an office then it will likely attract employees which will again increase the number of cars in the area (see above).

In the application form the paragraph which refers to parking states that the applicants cannot park in the current garage. This is factually incorrect as the previous 2 occupants of the property were able to easily park vehicles in the garage.

I agree with the Design and Access Statement paragraph 6 that the current garage is discordant in the street scene but this does not mean that a 2 storey replacement is necessary or desirable for the current garage.

24 Alexandra Road

It will block the afternoon sun

28 Alexandra Road (Edited)

1. Bulk and necessity - The extension reaches a height of 5.50 metres composed of two aspects

1st floor height appears to be higher than the proposed 3.04 metres at the highest point in the first application. This new application has a ground floor height indicated of 2.3 metres. Given the overall height is shown is 5.5 metres I believe that an upper floor height of 3.2 metres is excessive even after allowing for joists and insulation depth. The average ceiling height in the UK is 2.4 metres so 3.2 metres at the highest point is c33% higher than the UK

ceiling height

2. Light - I would like confirmation that the current plans do not impact our light. given the 5.5 metre height.

3. Aesthetics - every other property on the street has a view opposite of either a Victorian or Edwardian property. No other house has such as gap between it and the next property. If the gap is to be developed then I do believe that it should be in keeping with the street. The view from our property will be almost straight onto the extension. There are two aspects I would comment on

A. I believe the extension will look rather unusual given the ground floor has a height of 2.3 metres (reduced from 2.68 on the first application) and the upper floor will have a height of 3.2 metres (I believe this has increased from the 3.04 metres on the first application). I feel this will give it a 'top heavy' look which is not in keeping with what other neighbours look onto.

B. I note that on the design and access statement that it is "hoped that the changes in the height and mass of the proposal will meet the LPA requirement for the proposed extension to appear Subservient to the main Host dwelling.". Unless I am mistaken the overall height has reduced from 5.7 metres on the initial application to 5.5 metres. A 20cm reduction (a reduction of 3.5%) does not, I would argue, represent a significant reduction in height.

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5
National Planning Policy Framework (DLUHC 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG ‘Extending or Altering Your Home’ (WBC)

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area. The key considerations are the effects on the visual and residential amenities of the locality.

Visual Amenity

Alexandra Road is an attractive residential road of interesting large terraced houses with distinctive two storey bays some with a balcony detail to the front. The properties are primarily terraced with a front wall to the majority of the properties. They are set back from the road and some properties have created parking and driveways. There is little opportunity to extend to the side of these properties due to the terraced nature of the street.

No 27 does however have a gap to its southern side and currently there is a prefabricated garage.

The current proposal is for a two storey extension with a garage at ground floor and room above which is indicated to be used as a home office. The proposal has been amended since the previous application which was withdrawn.

The proposed extension would be set back from the front elevation and would have a full pitched roof with small pitched roof dormers to the east and west elevations. The previous withdraw scheme involved a steeper pitched roof with a flat top and box dormer at the rear.

The Design guidance set out in the Council's SPG – Extending or altering your home requires that the size and shape of any extension should normally be designed to ensure the original house remains the larger and more dominant feature. Therefore, the extension should not be higher than, or in front of, the main house. In order to ensure that your extension relates well to the house, its design should be consistent with the existing property's style and shape. If your extension is visible from the street, it is important to ensure that the roof form of the extension is similar to that of the existing house

The extension would be subservient to the main dwelling being set back and considerably lower than the existing house. The extension would be visible in the street scene but this needs to be seen in context with the size and scale of this houses and although the extension is at odds with the height of the current floors of the existing dwelling the design with its pitched roof and small pitched roof dormers seeks to take on board the roof slopes and gable features that are part of the character of the existing house and street scene in general.

Although the design of the extension has not been significantly reduced in height since the previous withdrawn application, the roof has been amended to provide a full pitched roof and pitched roof dormers provided.

Even though the design of the extension is slightly at odds with the existing building and its size, it is considered that it provides for a different scale of building more akin to a coach house. The subservient nature and amended design is considered acceptable and would not detract from the character of the existing building.

The proposed extension would not appear dominant in the street scene and on balance would not cause significant harm to the visual amenities of the area.

Residential Amenity

The most affected property is the neighbour to the south No.23 Alexandra Road.

The proposed extension would be to the north of this property. No 23 has limited small secondary windows on the northern elevation closest to the

boundary. There are further windows on the rear outrigger which face primarily into the garden of No 27 and are set further off the boundary. The extension is at a much lower scale than the existing house and although nearer to the boundary, its siting north and north east of this property would mean that there would not be any significant loss of light to the windows in the north elevation. Although the proposed extension may be visible from no 23 in view of windows currently facing north and the size and location of the proposed extension it is not considered it would cause detrimental visual impact.

The application does include windows to the east and west elevations. The dormer to the west would primarily serve a staircase. There are already inter - looking windows between the properties and it is not considered that these additional windows would significant overlook this property.

Objection have also been received 24, 26 and 28 Alexandra Road on the opposite side of the road. Concerns have raised with regards design, overlooking and loss of light. Design has been dealt with above.

In terms of loss of light the extension would be west of these properties and at a distance. The shadow and potential loss of light of the existing scale and size of the properties on the west side of Alexandra Road is likely to be much greater than the subservient extension. Furthermore being west the impact would be late in the day and only to the fronts of the properties.

In terms of overlooking, the additional overlooking would be from a first floor dormer window, although this is an additional window in this front elevation, in view of existing windows which already look towards these properties from No 27 and the neighbouring properties it is not considered that this would cause significant additional overlooking.

In terms of the existing dwelling the proposal includes a separate internal staircase which is indicated would be a home office. In view of the potential self-contained nature of the proposal, conditions to ensure that the use of the extension remains ancillary to the main dwelling would be appropriate in this residential area.

There would be no significant harm to residential amenity resulting from this proposal.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Matching materials
4. No additional openings
5. Ancillary to the main dwelling

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Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

Case Officer: Jackie Fox Date: 08.05.24

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 08.05.2024