Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0246/16 Recommendation – Approve

Site: 22 Croft avenue Southwick

Proposal: Removal and rebuilding of front wall with pillars up to 1.4m high and reduce width of opening to 4.75m wide with new sliding gate and matching wall panel in in grey powder coated aluminium.

Date of site visit: 8.3.16

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a semi-detached, two storey dwelling in a street of both semi-detached and detached dwellings. The dwellings are characterised by long rear gardens and generous frontages. The site is not within the Conservation Area and is not a listed building however the Conservation Area boundary is to the west towards Southwick Street. Croft Avenue is a pleasant, attractive street with a variety of styles of dwellings, the majority if which are traditional in form and style.

The application site takes the form of a traditional style building which originally matched the attached semi, no. 20. The buildings however currently vary in appearance with no. 22 being rendered with a new grey slate roof and tile hanging, the building has a clean, contemporary style and appearance. These works did not require planning consent and although the original character has been altered the Council have no control over such development.

The dwelling currently has a wide frontage with low level wall and piers which has been partially rendered to match the house. The applicant has advised that the wall is unstable and needs to be removed.

Permission is sought for the removal and rebuilding of the front wall and the new wall will be widened to reduce the opening onto the property frontage to 4.75 metres. Also proposed is a new sliding gate which will be motorised and will slide behind the proposed wall when opened. The new wall and pillars will be rendered in white to match the existing; the gate will be formed of horizontal aluminium bars which will be powder coated in grey. This design will be replicated in the top section of the adjacent wall.

The overall maximum height of the piers will not exceed 1.4 metres in height. The original submission showed the height of the piers, gate and wall to be equal at 1.4 metres, with spacing between horizontal aluminium bars as 10mm. Amended plans have been sought by officers to increase the spacing between the bars and to create a height differential between the piers and the gates/wall. Plans have been received

in accordance with this request along with confirmation of the colour of the powder coating to be used this is grey and the specific RAL colour is conditioned below.

Consultations

Southern Water: **-** No objection

West Sussex County Council - Highways Authority: -

There is no material change to the existing parking arrangements. The proposal will not affect the parking and turning situation or vehicle visibility upon exiting the site.

Ordinarily gates should be set back 5m from the carriageway edge to provide sufficient space for a car to wait whilst they are opened inwards to the site. It is unknown whether the sliding gates will be automatic. A car waiting to open these should do so without overhanging the highway, causing detriment to highway safety.

The proposal does not involve a material change to the existing situation from a highways point of view and therefore there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Representations

1 email representation has been received: -

This proposed development is entirely out of character for the residential location, which borders the Manor House Conservation Area, in terms of design, appearance and materials. The immediate area of Croft Avenue largely comprises houses built in the 1930s conventional style of brick walls under clay tiled roofs. The property has already been redeveloped unsympathetically with rendered walls under a slate roof with slate effect hangings on the bay. In my opinion the industrial style and scale of the proposed development should be entirely unacceptable in the Planning context.

Relevant Planning Policies

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’
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises upgrading of the existing housing stock located within the built up area and can be supported in principle. The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and the effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling and its surroundings.

Visual amenity

The main issue for consideration here is the impact of the proposed gates and wall upon the character and appearance of the street scene. It is acknowledged that Croft Avenue is a pleasant and characterful street with ‘conventional’ style dwellings most of which appear as built with 1920s/30s style and use of materials. Many of the property frontages are open or have some means of enclosure in the form of gates and fences however these are of a more traditional style being railings, wooden fencing, brick low level walls and open bar gates. These suit the style of the host dwellings.

In this case as stated above the host dwelling under permitted development has been altered in style to the preference of the applicants; this being more contemporary in appearance and less ‘rustic’ in style as much of the street is. These changes are largely superficial however and the original form of the dwelling still mirrors its attached neighbour.

The applicant has advised that the wall needs replacing and the large opening needs enclosing due to it being unstable and for the safety of the family at the property frontage respectively. This is acknowledged and as many other property frontages have been enclosed this would be acceptable in principle however only a low level means of enclosure could be supported in this case. The maximum height being 1.4 metres would be generally consistent with other mean of enclosure within this street. The gates would not ‘shut off’ the property frontage or stop it being viewed within the context of its neighbour and the street scene. A higher level gate and wall would not be suitable within this context.

The style and materials used are contemporary and modern in appearance and style. It can be argued that these materials are not consistent with the character of this street as there are no other examples of such a type of development. Yet similarly the dwelling is unique in this street in style and appearance. The proposed gates and wall would complement the current contemporary style of the house whereas a more traditional form of enclosure could be considered inconsistent, aside from being not to the applicant’s wishes.

This is an individual, extremely balanced case where the style of the gates and wall are not such that they would appeal to all members of the public (as indeed is the style of the host dwelling). However, it is considered this would not justify a refusal in this case. In arriving at this view, consideration has been given to the limited height of the gates and wall (at 1.4 metres high maximum) and also that this form of enclosure could be installed at 1 metre without planning consent, having a very similar impact upon the street scene. The amended plans sought improve the appearance and impact upon the street scene by reducing the solid form of the gates and wall with a 20mm gap between each bar. As stated above the differential between the height of the piers and the gate will also soften the impact and relate to a more tradition style of enclosure. In the light of the above, subject to safeguarding conditions and implementation of the amended plans this proposal is on balance acceptable.

Residential amenity

The new gates and wall are a means of enclosure to the front of the property. These are limited to 1.4 metres in height and therefore are no of such a height or proximity to adjacent dwellings to result in and loss of light or overbearing impact. The style and use of materials may not appeal to all tastes and be the choice of many however personal preference and style is not a planning consideration here. The impact of this upon the character of the area is as discussed above.

Accessibility and parking

As stated above the existing parking arrangements remain unchanged and although the access from Croft Avenue is to be narrowed from existing there will still remain an opening of 4.75 metres. This will not restrict visibility when exiting the site. The highways authority advised that a vehicle should be able to park clear of the highway whilst gates are opening. These are however motorised gates and can be opened on approach therefore there would be no obstruction to the highway. A condition is attached to ensure that the motor is fully functional at all times and that the gates should not be used manually for vehicular access into the site. Other than this no highway safety issues have been identified.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Permission relates to approved plans
3. The spacing gaps between the aluminium horizontal bars of the gate and fencing panel hereby approved shall be a minimum of 20mm.
4. The overall maximum height of the fence, gates and brick piers shall not exceed 1.4 metres in height.
5. The gates hereby permitted shall be electronically motorised with remote control this shall be in place and maintained at all times. At no time shall the gates been manually operated when a vehicle is entering the site.

Informative

1. Proactive statement.

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

Case Officer: Hannah Barker Date: 19th April 2016

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 20.04.2016