P & R 7/3/08

Application Number: ADC/0762/07 **Recommendation – APPROVE (subject to section 106 Obligation)**

Site: **7 Test Road, Sompting BN15 0ES**

Proposal: **Three-bedroom detached house to south**

The Application

The application site is part of the curtilage of the existing semi-detached house at No.7 Test Road and is located on the north side of the junction with Arun Close. The site comprises a large side garden and is currently partly occupied by a flat-roofed side extension to the house.

No.7 is one of a number of semi-detached houses of this type on this side of Test Road. To the west, located on higher ground, are a number of bungalows set back from the road behind high brick walls. To the east, in Arun Close, is a pair of semi-detached houses (No's 1 & 3) to the rear of the proposals and on the southern side of the close is a chalet bungalow. At the end of Arun Close on the north side, is a newly-built detached house (ADC/147/06).

The proposal is to demolish the existing side extension to the south of No.7 and erect (as amended) a detached three-bedroom house with parking and garage to the rear and private rear garden.

Consultations and Representations

County Transport Planning Services: No objection subject to a contribution of £1,800 (secured via a section106 Obligation) towards sustainable transport schemes in the area and planning conditions requiring the new access to be installed prior to occupation, provision of cycle parking and on-site space for construction materials and plant.

Sompting Parish Council: No objection.

Third Parties: 7 letters of objection have been received from the residents of No's 3, 5 & 12 Test Road and No's 1, 2, 6 & 10 Arun Close.

The main points of objection are:-

1. Overlooking and loss of privacy from proposed dormers.
2. Loss of sunlight
3. Highway safety, congestion and already excessive parking in the area.
4. Dormer window at front out of character with surrounding houses.
5. Loss of trees originally conditioned and planted during Test Road development.

6. Additional vehicular access.
7. Alteration to the Test Road building line including loss of existing site boundary wall.
8. Small garden size.
9. Overdevelopment of the area.

[NB. a request has been made by the resident of No.3 Test Road to speak at the Committee meeting]

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, CH1, NE1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV3-5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2, AH5 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising Development Control Standard No.2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats'.
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2003 and ADC 2004)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS3 ' Housing' (DCLG 2006)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The site is located within a residential part of the built-up area of Sompting and the proposal constitutes infilling as provided for in both Structure and Local Plan policies. There is no objection in principle to infill development within the built-up area and, in order to meet the housing requirements of the approved Structure Plan and Local Plan, a significant proportion of housing development by way of 'unidentified' small infill sites is necessary.

Structure Plan policies give significant weight to making the best use of land through higher density development provided that the impact on the character of the area and environment is acceptable (LOC1, ERA1, CH1) and subject to policy DEV1 which requires high quality development. Policy DEV4 states (amongst other things) that development should not be permitted unless the travel needs it generates are met. DEV5 states that "Development should not be permitted unless the level of parking is compatible with the need to avoid environmental or safety problems and the need is to encourage walking, cycling and the use of passenger transport where this is or can be a realistic alternative".

Local Plan policy AH2 relates to new residential development (by way of infilling and redevelopment) and states that new dwellings should be designed so that their appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live and are in keeping with and enhance the existing local environment with particular attention being paid to architectural form, height, materials, density, layout of buildings and hard surfaced areas.

Government policy guidance in PPS3 encourages best use of urban land for housing development, particularly affordable housing and a mixture of types to create a balanced community, at higher densities (avoiding developments at less than 30 dwellings per hectare) and without rigid application of parking and amenity space standards. However, it also seeks to improve the quality and attractiveness of residential areas and urges imaginative designs and layouts which make more efficient and sustainable use of land without compromising the quality of the environment. PPS1 states:-

> "Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."

PPS3 also states that Councils should "facilitate good design by identifying the distinctive features that define the character of a particular local area..... ...Careful attention to design is particularly important where the chosen local strategy involves intensification of the existing urban fabric... .....successful intensification need not mean high rise development or low quality accommodation with inappropriate space.....The density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring a replication of existing style of form.....If done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment."

Character and density

The concerns with the siting of the proposed dwelling would be whether it can successfully integrate within the character of the surrounding area taking into consideration the existing building lines and setbacks from the highway.

The proposals have been amended and now show the omission of the rooms in the roof with front and rear dormers. The proposed house (now three bedroom) has been altered so that the first floor front elevation would be tile hung the same as No's 1–7 to the north. The building lines of the rest of the semi-detached houses are maintained and as a result the ridge of the roof would be no higher that the neighbouring properties.

The density of the surrounding area is approximately 41 dwellings per hectare (dph). As a result of the addition of the proposed house the density of the site and the existing dwelling (No.7) would be 47 dph which is still within Government Guidance of 30-50 dph and not considered to be out of character.

The proposed house would retain a gap of 4m from the main side wall to the edge of the highway, with the side entrance porch being located 2.8m away. The building lines of the semi-detached dwellings to the north would be retained and the building would be the same height which is considered acceptable. It should be noted that a similar encroachment towards the

highway exists on the southern side of No.1 Trent Close (albeit in the form of a side extension) which results in the building being 2.4m from the highway. A similar relationship exists between the building line of properties on the north side of Trent Close.

Although the main pedestrian access to the house would be via a south side porch approached from Arun Close, the building would maintain the appearance of others in the street with the tile hung first floor elevation, and it is therefore considered that, on balance the design would not warrant refusal on the basis of being out of character or incongruous.

Residential amenity

The existing house to the south is on significantly lower ground than the proposed new house. It was felt that as originally proposed with front and rear dormers, that it would have been particularly overbearing for No.1 Arun Close. The side of No.1 Arun Close has secondary access which would be shielded from view by the existing garage, a window in the north side at first floor serves only the stairs of No.1 and it is considered that although there would be views over the rear garden these would be no more intrusive than already exists from the rear of No's 1, 3 & 5 Test Road.

The rear of the proposed building would be 14m from the side of No.1 Arun Close to the rear, which is consistent with the minimum standards as set out in Development Control Standard No.2 'Space around New Dwellings and Flats'. The south side elevation would be 20m from the dwelling on the opposite side of Arun Close and would not have an effect on their privacy.

The proposed scheme retains a private garden located behind a proposed 1.5m fence following the southern building line to the rear. The rest of the south side of the site would remain open similar to what currently exists.

The rear private garden area for the proposed dwelling would be approximately 52sqm. This falls short of the Council's DC Standard which requires 85sqm of amenity space for dwellings up to 120sqm. However, it is the same depth (11m) as those of the adjacent properties (No's 1–7 Test Road) and a similar size to the other new property at No.5 Arun Close (60sqm). It is therefore considered refusal on lack of amenity space would be unwarranted.

Residential amenity – loss of trees

There have been objections to the application on the grounds that a number of trees have been felled. However, none were covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

Highways and parking

WSCC have no objection to the amount of parking on the proposed new site. One new space would be made for the existing house at No.7 which should be implemented prior to development. There have been concerns raised by surrounding neighbours by the amount of on street parking that currently exists within Arun Close and the northern part of Test Road. However, WSCC have no objection to the predicted intensification of use of the plot.

Covered and secure cycle parking exists at the rear of the proposed house in the form of a garden shed which is to be retained.

Recommendation

Subject to completion of a Section 106 Obligation requiring payment of £1,800 to sustainable transport improvements in the area, APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and would help meet the need for additional housing without detracting from the existing local urban environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2) and the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (LOC1, NE1-2, CH1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5).

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)
2. C14Ai (Permission relates to amended plans)
3. C12Ai (External materials for walls & roof of building to be approved)
4. C11Aii (Landscaping scheme to be approved and implemented and replacement of trees that die)
5. No development on the site shall commence until the vehicular access serving the No.7 Test Road has been constructed in accordance with the approved drawing.
6. C9N (Temporary provision for contractors' vehicles, materials, etc. on site)
7. (removal of PD rights for extensions or curtilage buildings)

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