Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0363/08 Recommendation - Refuse

Site: **3 Coastguard Cottages, Old Fort Road Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5HR**

Proposal: **Additional storey on corner (to provide bedroom with south balcony)**

The Application

The site is located within the built-up area on Shoreham Beach, on the north side of Old Fort Road. It comprises a single-storey terraced dwelling, formerly the coastguards offices, located on a corner plot with The Burrells to the east and Old Fort Road to the south. Attached to the west is a single-storey continuation linking to and forming part of the two-storey house No.2 Coastguard Cottages. To the north, there is a much shorter single-storey continuation attaching to the side of the two-storey house No.1 The Burrells (also part of the former coastguard cottages). Shared with No.2, there is an undercroft accessway to the entrance door to No.3 and to the rear of the property, where there is a tiny courtyard. There is off-street parking in front.

The property as existing internally accommodates a bathroom, bedroom, living room, kitchen and store, all at ground floor. Permission is sought to add a first floor above the existing living room to provide a further bedroom. The extension will have a hipped roof and a front balcony. The maximum height of the extension is 6.4 metres, with a width of 4.1 metres and depth of 5.2 metres.

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties: 3 letters have been received, from residents of No.2 Coastguard Cottages, No.1 The Burrells and No.118 Old Fort Road.

No.2 states no objection subject to a brick partition being constructed in the open roof space on the dividing line between the two properties for reasons of fire safety and noise and dust prevention.
No.118 states that the development is quite acceptable.

No.1 The Burrells objects on the following grounds:-

- The height of the extension will block light from adjacent landing window and toilet.
- In the future windows may be inserted on the north elevation which will overlook the landing window.
- The height of the new roof will block light into their back garden.
- The increase in height of the building sets a precedent for further height increase of the adjacent single-

storey building (part of No.2) which would result in further loss of light and privacy.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): CH1, DEV1
Adopted 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'
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policy DEV1 requires new development to be of high quality construction, layout, scale and appearance, taking into account the need to integrate with existing development and have regard to local context, including local character and distinctiveness, streetscape, views into and out of the site and materials and building styles. The aim is to create a high quality, socially inclusive and adaptable environment for occupiers and users meeting their long-term needs.

Policy AH7 of the Local Plan, relating specifically to extensions and alterations to dwellings, states that they should be designed so as not to result in unacceptable loss of light or privacy or have an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings and be sympathetic to the original dwelling in design and materials. Supplementary Planning Guidance is contained in DC Standard No. 3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'.

Government policy is set out in Planning Policy Statement PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'. Relevant paragraphs are 17, which refers to the commitment to protecting and improving the environment; 18 which states that planning should seek to maintain and improve the local environment and help to mitigate the effects of declining environmental quality through positive policies on issues such as design; and 34 which states that good design is indivisible from good planning and that design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, should not be acceptable.

Visual Amenity

Due to the siting of the building on a corner plot, the proposed first-floor extension will be very prominent and clearly visible within the streetscene. Although there are two-storey dwellings surrounding the site to the rear and opposite in both Old Fort Road and The Burrells, it is considered that the first floor addition in this case will be unsympathetic and out of keeping with the character of the existing dwellings.

It will spoil the existing group of former Coastguard Cottages which, although only dating from the early 1950s, have an appearance that is distinct from the surrounding dwellings in the locality. At present, the cottages have a well-proportioned, harmonious appearance. The single-storey part, with archway through, links the two-storey west part and north part, and acts as a counterbalance. To add an additional storey on the corner, as proposed, would destroy the existing proportions and create a very awkward and unsatisfactory form and appearance.

The proposed front balcony, supported on piers, is even more out of place and would add to the overall incongruity.

Residential Amenity

With regard to the residential amenities of the dwelling itself, it is considered that the proposed increase in floorspace relative to the size of the plot would not be acceptable. The rear courtyard area provides a negligible amount of external private amenity space. It is untypical of other properties in this locality and falls far below the Council's minimum standard of 50sqm rear garden area for a small two-bedroom terraced dwelling. Given that the proposal would create a second bedroom, it would enable the dwelling to be occupied by a family with a child (or children), thus making rear garden space all the more important in terms of providing usable outside play space. It is therefore considered that the extension represents overdevelopment of this limited site.

It is not considered that there will be an unacceptable adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent properties.
The house to the north, No.1 The Burrells, has two windows which face south but, as these are toilet and landing windows, any loss of light or overbearing effect is not considered to warrant refusal, as they do not serve habitable rooms. It is not considered that loss of light to the rear garden of No.1 would be significant given the distance between the proposed additional storey and its rear garden.

The extension is 4.8 metres from the attached single-storey part of the dwelling to the west (No.2) and there will be no adverse impact on residential amenity.

Recommendation

REFUSE on grounds that:-

1. B5AR – policies CH1, DEV1, AG1
2. H13AR – policies DEV1, AG1, AH7