Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application expiry: 27.04.04.

Application Number: ADC/0127/07 **Recommendation - Refuse**

Site: **14 Croft Avenue Southwick West Sussex BN42 4AB**

Proposal: **Ground floor side extension and conversion of dwelling to 2 two-bedroom flats**

The Application

The application property is the eastern half of a pair of 1930's semi-detached houses on the south side of croft Avenue.

The proposal is for a single-storey side extension and conversion of the dwelling into 2 two-bedroom flats.
The proposed extension would be1.45m in width at the most northern point and 2.6m wide at the rear, it would be 8.3m deep with a height to the dummy pitch roof at the front of 3.5m. The rear wider part of the extension would have a flat roof and be 2.85m high.

The property has had a detached pitched roof garage re-built (SW/2/75), and rooms in the roof with a rear dormer (SW/12/03).

Consultations and Representations

Consultations/Comments

Chief Environmental Health Officer - Having viewed the proposals I can confirm there are no environmental health objections to the application.

WSCC- Highways & Transport - The site already benefits from an existing vehicular access onto Croft Avenue. From inspection of the submitted plans, there would not appear to be any apparent issues in respect of visibility. In terms of material vehicle movements, I would not expect this proposal to result in any significant intensification. The submitted plans do not show the proposed car parking, I would though accept the provision of a single space per dwelling. Secure, covered cycle parking should be provided for the benefit of both dwellings. A TAD contribution of £1,138 would be applicable (based on the provision of a new dwelling unit with one car parking space, with consideration given to the existing use of the property).No highway objection would be raised.

Third Parties

There has been two letters of objection from the adjacent properties No's 12 & 16 Croft Avenue.

The Owner of No.12 states that their main concern is the noise factor due to extra persons living in their adjoining neighbours house. The comment that this style of house though attractive is not very sound proof.

The owner of No.16 raises a number of concerns regarding the proposal, some of which is stated, do not comply with the Council's Development Control Standards:-

- The conversion would not fit the character of Croft Avenue, a road of good sized family homes.
- The conversion would create a living room adjoining a bedroom of the attached property.
  (Section 1.4 of Adur District Council Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions').

- The proposed extension is planned to come up to our boundary without leaving a metre gap which would create the appearance of a terrace.
- The plan shows a flat roof extension with a pitched façade.
  (Dev. Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings').

- The side extension would prevent the garage from being used and remove 3 parking spaces on the drive. This is a narrow road with cars parked on both sides due to the proximity to Southwick Square shops with its pay and display car park.
- The extension would reduce daylight to our property, with a brick wall shading the windows that provide 40 % of the total glass in the kitchen.
- Due to the raised floors in these properties, we would have a particularly high brick wall overshadowing our patio area.
- Conversion of the upper floor of the house into a living area rather than bedrooms, would result in the neighbouring properties being more overlooked. **[NB. A request has been made to speak at Committee].**

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005): LOC1, NE1-2, CH1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996): AG1, AH7, AH1-2, AH5, AH9, AT12-13.
The Adur Development Plan – Submission Core Strategy 2006-26 (ADC2007): H3, T3.
And Appendix II 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising:-
Dev Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' & Dev Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions'.

Planning Assessment

The main planning concerns of the proposal are the effect that the proposed extension and sub-division of the property will have on the amenity of the adjacent neighbours in terms of noise and disturbance, and the effect the side extension will have on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Policies
Policy AH9 of the Local Plan states that the conversion of dwellinghouses into smaller self-contained units will be permitted providing that: access and car parking provision is acceptable; the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking or noise transmission through party walls and the type of property concerned and the standard of accommodation to be provided accord to the adopted standards.

Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions' states amongst other things that sound insulation measures will always be required as part of any conversion but, where noise disturbance cannot be minimised by appropriate 'stacking' and 'side-by-side' layouts, the onus will be on the applicant to prove that adequate sound insulation measures can be provided. It also states that where conversions include the addition of an extension, or any other material change to the exterior of the building, the effect of these on the property itself, on adjoining premises and on the local environment generally must be considered, and that conversions should result in an acceptable amount of amenity space for each flat.

The proposed conversion would result in two 2-bedroom flats one accessed from the proposed side extension one from the original front door.

Residential amenity – overbearing effect
The proposed side extension is stepped in design to prevent any adverse affect being felt by the porch of the neighbouring property in terms of loss of light or overbearing appearance. The wider section would be 0.15m from the boundary and would extend past the adjacent property (No. 16) which is located 1.0m from the boundary by 4.1m. The adjacent property would

The properties on this side of Croft Avenue have large rear gardens with rear elevations which have southern aspects. The proposed extension would be apparent from the rear rooms and patio of No.16 but would still not reduce the amount of light available to unacceptable levels.

Residential amenity – Noise transmission
The proposed conversion of the property relies on very little alteration to the room layout and design of the interior space. The proposed extension would be used as a second (single) bedroom for the ground floor flat and the independent entrance to the upper maisonette.

Whilst the room stacking within the two individual properties is considered to be acceptable in that the same rooms are above each other, there is no evidence provided to suggest that the transference of noise laterally into the upper bedrooms of the attached property (No.12) would be sufficiently abated.

Environmental Health do not have any objections to the proposals so the sound insulation of the lunge to the maisonette could be covered by a planning condition, and under building regulations.

Residential amenity – privacy
The conversion of the first floor rear bedroom to a living space would intensify the use of this room but would not result in a loss of privacy to the adjacent properties.

Parking and access
The WSCC Highways officer has stated that 1 car parking space would be adequate for these types of property in this location and although Croft Avenue is a busy street with on street parking being used by people using Southwick Square. It is still considered the space at the front of the property would be adequate for 3 car parking spaces.

Amenity space.
The existing single dwelling has a large rear garden (280 sq m) and the location of the side extension would prevent any use by the upper maisonette. The only garden space available to the upper maisonette would be the front garden adjacent to the parking area. A low boundary wall means that this area of garden is not private and could not realistically be used to the full. A large park is at the end of the street but this does not allow for any rear private enjoyment of outdoor space.

Visual amenity.
The differing widths of the side extension would result in an amount of flat roof protruding from beside the dummy pitch roof and being visible from the road, contrary to the Dev Controls Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'. The proposed addition would also be seen against the background of the existing hipped roof garage which it is considered would add to the muddled amount of differing roof designs, having an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the locality and being detrimental to the character of the application dwelling.

Other issues
Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions' does not give minimum standards for bathroom sizes but it is considered that as the ground floor flat has a single room that at some point the property could be occupied by a young family and on this basis the conversion of a small downstairs w/c into a shower room would not be of a sufficiently high standard to encourage this type of occupation.

No provision has been given within the proposal for covered and secure bicycle storage or bin storage, and although a prefabricated structure could utilise the space between the side extension and the boundary, it is felt that this would generally add to the incongruity of the side extension.

Conclusion
The character of the properties in Croft Avenue is one of large semi-detached and detached houses set back from the road in large plots. Where alterations have been made they have been sympathetic to the character of the original dwellings and street in general. There has been no subdivision of houses into flats having occurred already in the street.

It is considered that the proposed side extension and conversion of the dwelling would have both a detrimental effect on the character of the locality and that of the original dwelling in terms of it appearance and the quality of residential amenity of the resultant flats.

Recommendation

REFUSE on ground that :-

1. The conversion of this purpose-built family house into flats would be out of keeping with the character of the locality and result in accommodation which would not have adequate standards of residential amenity in terms of outside amenity space for the upper maisonette and bathroom space for the ground floor flat, contrary to the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (DEV1) and the Adur District Local Plan (~~AH2~~ AG1 & AH9).

2. B5BR
   The proposed extension, by reason of its large size and unsympathetic design, would be out of keeping in scale and appearance with the existing building and would detract to an unacceptable extent from the visual amenities and residential environment of the locality and thereby conflict with the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (DEV1) and the Adur District Local Plan (AG1 & AH7).

Case Officer: [illegible]
Date: 04.04.07