Stephen Bromley Associates Limited

Chartered Building Surveyors

5 West Street, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 5WF.
Tel: Shoreham-by-Sea [redacted]. Fax: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

SWB/aa/9852.042

7 March 2013

11 MAR 2013

Development Control
Adur District Council
Civic Centre
Ham Road
Shoreham by Sea
BN43

Dear Sirs,

RE: Planning Application – AWDM/0167/13 – 111 Old Fort Road, Shoreham by Sea

We have been asked by our clients, the owners of 109 and 113 Old Fort Road, to look at this application. We have inspected the planning documents and have had to advise our clients that the affect on their buildings (particularly 113 Old Fort Road) would be substantial.

Following discussions with my clients, they have advised me to put forward my concerns and I therefore report as follows:

The site is relatively narrow and only suitable for one property. To install two would be out of character with this part of the road. The other houses in this section of road are all detached, single dwelling houses.

We note that although the properties themselves comply with the regulations as to minimum size for a three bedroomed semi-detached, they are absolutely on the minimum in a situation where generally medium sized or larger properties are expected.

We note information given on the design and Access Statement about the amount of development and actual floor area. Clearly without internal access we are unable to check the existing, but must still mention that there is a significant difference between a bungalow with accommodation in the roof space and a two storey house.

With regard to the plot's density, the figures are relative to all situations including high density terraced units. On Shoreham beach we are looking at low density in most instances, with only an occasional area where medium density is encountered. This is generally only on the new estates. The new estates are away from the area of this development.

With regard to the planning history, we note that the properties mentioned are not in the section of road by this property. In addition they substantially relate to demolition of non-standard, unmortgageable properties on sites which are wider and are not relative to this particular unit.

We also note that they include a property on the opposite side of the road, where clearly the situation is different. They have particularly alluded to this property regarding a substantially larger floor area. However there are no comments with regard to the building/site ratio and the property is again, as mentioned, on the south side of Old Fort Road, which is a different situation.

The next heading on the Design and Access Statement is 'layout'. We note that the total floor area exceeds requirements. We must, however, mention that it only just exceeds the requirement and which is totally unusual for the relevant area of Shoreham Beach.

Turning to the rear gardens, our calculations suggest that there is a rear garden of 68 square metres whereas the requirement, as set out in the Space Standards, is 85m^2 and this does not therefore comply. The requirement is for rear garden area and the patio at the front cannot therefore be included.

Policy AH2:

We particularly note item C and cannot agree with this statement. The proposal does have a significant unneighbourly affect particularly on 113 Old Fort Road, where much of the rear garden will be affected by a loss of sunlight during the afternoon and give the area a very enclosed feel.

We have seen the shadow plans; however we do not believe that these give a true representation, especially in the afternoon where the existing sloping roof allows sunlight into the rear garden of 113 during the summer, whereas with the eaves as drawn which are only some 600mm from the boundary, the proposal will have a very substantial affect.

Turning to access we note that the front garden is substantially shingle. This would not comply with Building Regulations Part M, but could no doubt be altered if required.

Daylight and Sunlight:

Once again we would contest that the pictures provided for afternoon are a true representation, but even on these it can be seen that the shading against the side of No. 113 is significantly more with the proposal than the existing building. To state that there is no discernible difference is clearly incorrect.

The latitude and longitude appear incorrect, this area is approximately 50 degrees north whereas the pictures note 37 degrees north. Also the August picture does not include for British summer time.

The shading drawing, 25 August, whilst at 1pm, there would perhaps be no shading of No. 113 by 3 o'clock in the afternoon, with an altitude of, say, 45 degrees the shading would extend four and a half metres across the garden of No. 113, this being some two metres further than the existing pitched roof as marked on Plan 01. We would argue that the plan on 01 has the existing roof some 300mm higher than the actual situation and thus, with this marked at the correct height, the extra disturbance would be somewhere about 2.3 metres.

Regarding the shading drawing, 25 March, we note that the shading from the front fence to No. 111 would appear to extend some 4.3 metres from the boundary, with a boundary height of 1.8 metres. The relevant shadow for an eaves at 5.3 metres high would be virtually 12 metres, thus extending right across the property of 113, not the small amount that they appear to suggest. We accept that if the existing building had a gable to front and rear and a continuous ridge, the situation would have been similar; however, the existing roof is virtually pointed and two thirds of the way back from the front of No. 113.

Re the picture 25th December, the shading drawing cannot be correct as there is clearly less shading of the front garden from the boundary fence than on the 25th March, albeit that it is 2 hours nearer to midday.

An assessment made by extrapolating from the fence on 25th March shows the shading on 25 December going half way across the garden of number 109.

With regard overlooking, it is clear that the arrangement with bedroom 2 forces the occupants to look out across the back gardens of the adjacent properties as opposed to the single window in the existing property.

Although the original proposal has been reduced by the removal of the second floor, the eaves of the building extend out from the property. Thus at first floor ceiling height they are within about 600mm of the boundary both sides and actually somewhat closer to my clients' properties than the original proposal.

As this is at a full first floor ceiling height level there is clearly a substantial affect on the overall appearance.

Even by the architect's plans, the distance between 113 and the boundary is 1.35 metres and from the boundary to the wall of 109, 2.4 metres. There is also a gap of 1.8 metres between the east side wall of 113 and the boundary, giving more of a feeling of space between detached properties, than that given by this proposal.

As mentioned earlier, we believe that the plot is unsuitable for two units and indeed the way that it has clearly been squeezed into the plot reinforces that view.

The Design and Access Statement seeks to state that the existing bungalow is dilapidated and shows signs of foundations failing through differential settlement. Whilst we do not know the property intimately, this would be very unusual in the locality as properties in this area are generally built off a concrete raft over the shingle base. The shingle base cannot move in that way. We are told by others who have seen the inside of the property that they are unaware of such problems.

With regard to the roofing, the roof is covered with interlocking tiles. Whilst there may be an odd tile missing, we can see no reason why this should necessitate complete re-roofing. Such roofs can be patched almost indefinitely.

Similarly windows can be replaced and external walls insulated whether this be internally or externally.

There is a comment that the bungalow is unlikely to be mortgageable without substantial remedial works. We regret this again seems unlikely and we understand there is in fact a mortgage on the property at the present time.

There is a heading, "Other Three Storey Houses in the street have kept third floor as low as possible". The comment is that by removing the second floor and replace it with a pitched roof they have overcome this objection. The way this is worded gives a feeling that they are considering a loft conversion at later date and, if it is decided to grant approval, we would ask that all permitted development rights are removed.

Finally, I would reaffirm that with the building taking so much of the site, with only small gaps to the boundaries either side (in the case of the eaves only 600mm) this is an unsatisfactory arrangement, not suitable for the position.

With regard to the letters supporting the application, these appear to be substantially in relation to keeping a family together or allowing more than one generation to be together. These are clearly not planning matters and all the documentation appears to suggest that this is not the case, the reason for the proposal is to make money.

Stephen Bromley Associates

9852.043
7 March 2013

[redacted]