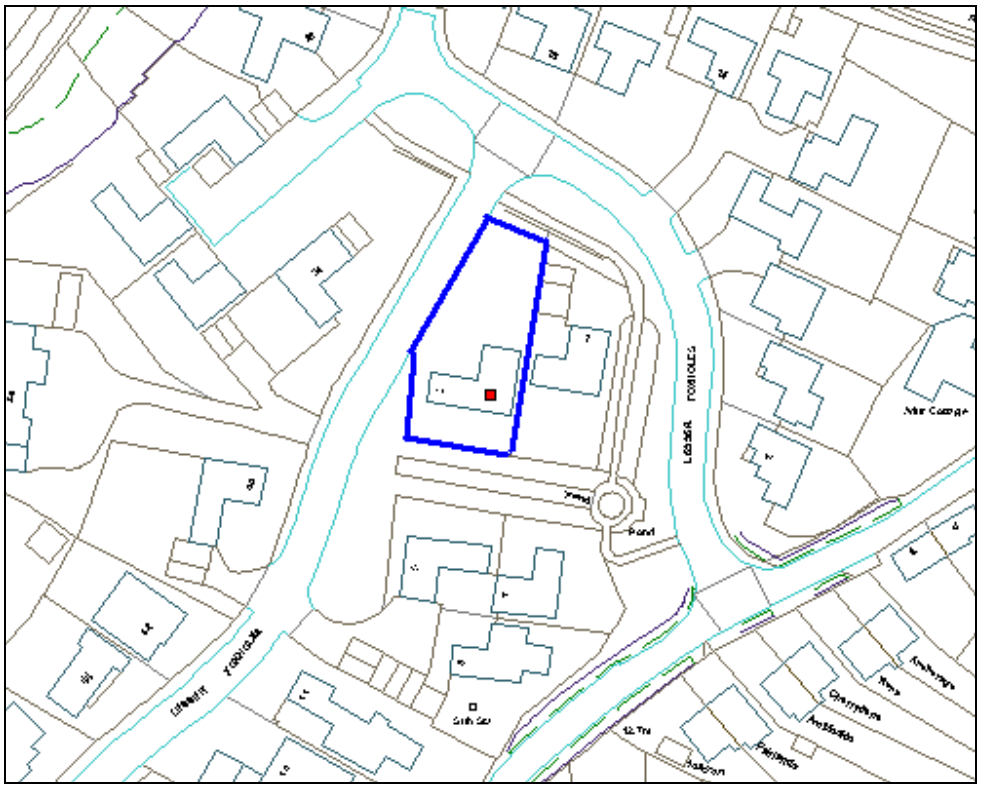
Application Number: AWDM/0235/13 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 3 Lesser Foxholes Shoreham-by-Sea

Proposal: Front extension and alterations to existing house

Agent: Mr Luke Carter Ward: St. Nicolas
Case Officer: Matthew Porter



Not to Scale

Reproduced from OS Mapping with the permission of HMSO © Crown Copyright Licence number LA100024321

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The proposal is for a cat slide extension to infill the front part of the building. This would measure (at max) 6 metres in height, 6.05 metres in length, and 5.58 metres in width.

The application property is a two-storey property built in an overtly modern design and style. It exhibits a distinctive L-shaped footprint and asymmetrical cat slide roof to the front.

The application site is in a low-density outer residential suburb of Shoreham. The immediate close to which the site belongs has an open character, and buildings in it have a similar design and style.

This application is presented at Committee because it has been “called in” by a Councillor.

Consultations

Adur & Worthing Councils: **Environmental Health** Contamination Officer *requests precautionary contaminated land condition to be imposed.*

Representations

None

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur Local Plan: AG1, AH7

Planning Assessment

Principle

Upgrading of residential accommodation is acceptable in principle, subject to no visual and unneighbourly harm arising from it.

Visual Amenity

The immediate close has a locally distinctive character and appearance. This is principally derived from the overtly modern architectural style and design of the buildings within it, including the application property. In particular, those buildings share a common characteristic form and shape by way of their L-shaped footprints and distinctive asymmetrical frontages.

As the application property is an unaltered example of this prevailing design and style, it positively contributes to the local distinctiveness of its immediate surroundings.

Its contribution to the street scene is made greater by its long plot frontage addressing the street, together with its open driveway out onto it. It is a prominent building with a strong visual presence in the street scene. The narrowness of this building’s flank closest to the highway is a distinguishable feature in its own right. This makes it imperative that development of less than a high standard of design to this building is resisted.

Unfortunately, the proposed development is of a poor quality design that would be unsympathetic - it would detract from the exterior design of the host building to the detriment of its character and appearance, and to that of the wider street scene.

The extension would project out hard up against the building's forward most front wall, and continue through the low eaves to straddle the near entire width of the building's frontage. An extension of these substantial proportions would be readily noticeable in the street scene, closing off the spacious aspect of the building's plot frontage. Moreover, it would appear as an overly obtrusive and assertive addition to the host building. This is because it would compete for unduly equal prominence with the building's existing forward protrusion and exposed flank. Those most distinguishable qualities of the building - its exposed narrow flank section, L-shaped footprint, and distinctive roof shape (roughly 1/3 of the roof is low eaves cat-slide forward projection with the remainder being the overtly high set eaves of the main building) - would be irrevocably diminished.

Such unacceptable outcomes would be worsened by the extension's contrived fenestration arrangement. With perceivable lower cill heights, the new flank window and ground floor glazing would sit awkwardly with the building's existing glazing. Also the row of roof lights would be anomalous with the prevailing design and style of the building. These failings only emphasis the proposal's poorly conceived design.

There are other front extensions in the close. But they are mostly less assertive structures built onto buildings of less prominence than that of the application property. Despite their existence, there remains sufficient commonality in the form and shape of buildings in the close to retain a visual unity within it. For the most part, these earlier extensions fail to relate symmetrically to the main house. In any event, poor design in other parts of the street is no justification for accepting further harm.

For all these reasons, the proposed development would detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area and harm the street scene, eroding an element of local distinctiveness. As such it would contrary to Polices BE1 and CC6 of the South East Plan and Saved Adur Local Plan Policy AH7 in so far that they seek to avoid such harm. Given the main issue in this case relates to design and appearance of a development, the National Planning Policy Framework does not alter these conclusions.

Neighbour Amenity

The extension is physically removed from immediate neighbours so no material harm would arise from it onto their living conditions, in terms of overbearing and overshadowing effect and loss of privacy and overlooking.

Contaminated Land

The site is not contaminated so an informative would suffice to raise the applicant's awareness of this risk.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the following reason:-

The proposal, by reason of its excessive and unduly prominent scale and unsympathetic poor design, would form an overly obtrusive and assertive addition and incongruous feature that would relate poorly to the existing scale, form, and architectural qualities of the host building (in particular its exposed narrow flank, L-shaped footprint, and distinctive roof shape) to the detriment of the established character and appearance of the street scene and diminishment of its local distinctiveness. It would thereby conflict with the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7).

Informative
The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and discussing those with the Applicant via their agent by email and telephone. However, the applicant declined to amend the proposal to resolve the issues of concern and since those issues are so fundamental to the proposal it has not been possible to negotiate a satisfactory way forward and due to the harm which has been clearly identified within the reason for the refusal, and approval has not been possible.

2nd April 2013