Expiry Date -

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – REFUSE**
AWDM/1244/12

Site: **6B Eighth Avenue Lancing**

Proposal: **First floor side extension**

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: /N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The proposal is for a first floor extension to measure (at max) 6.5 metres in height, 7.5 metres in length, and 3.1 metres in width.

The application site is a semi-detached two-storey building. Its walls are a mix of brick and tile, with section of tile hanging. The roof is made of concrete tile.

The application property is situated across a green where there is a mixture of property types.

Relevant Planning History

L/65/02/TP
Ground and first floor rear extension
Approved Conditionally 20-05-02

Consultations

Lancing Parish Council: *Objected, considered a poor design and out of character with street scene. Could set bad precedent.*

Representations

None

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

South East Plan (GOSE 2009): BE1, CC1, CC6
Adur Local Plan: AG1, AH7 and Appendix 11 ‘Supplementary Planning Guidance’ comprising: Development Control Standard No.3 ‘Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings’

Planning Assessment

Principle

Upgrading of residential accommodation is acceptable in principle

Visual amenity

The building is of a different design to others in the street. Nevertheless it does contribute to the street scene; the noticeable visual gap between it and neighbouring buildings creates a sympathetic setting to immediate neighbouring properties.

This spacing, which separates the 2 storey elements of adjoining dwellings, is an important unifying element in the street scene. It creates a noticeable pattern of visual gaps between dwellings at first floor level. Although there are a few exceptions to this pattern they do not undermine the overall coherence of the street scene.

The first floor extension would result in the loss of this spacing and openness as it would be built hard up against the shared boundary alongside the neighbouring building to the south, which is itself built up close to the same boundary. This would result in an uncomfortable terracing effect that would appear visually obtrusive. The extension would represent a bulky addition at first floor level, which would appear cramped when viewed from the street. Such harmful loss of openness and resultant cramped terracing would contravene the advice set out in the Council's adopted guidance on the design of household extensions. This seeks the retention of at least 1 metre between an extension and a boundary.

Infilling this spacing would also adversely impact the setting of the property to the immediate south, which is of a pleasant design. The proposed extension would obscure much of its flank, which exhibits some architectural detailing, and result in an uncomfortably cramped relationship between the two buildings.

Moreover, the introduction of the first floor extension would disrupt the symmetry of the pair of buildings to which it would belong. This pair have largely retained their original uniform form and shape (the front porch to the applicant property has not fundamentally changed this). The proposal would be detrimental to their symmetrical appearance.

Finally, the design of the extension would result in the first floor awkwardly 'floating', with an open space directly below it. Such a design is highly incongruous with the host building, with its compact form, solid walls, and heavy exterior materials and finishes. As the extension design is uncharacteristic of its host, it would fail to appear as truly integral to the detriment of the appearance of the host building.

In the street there are other instances of first floor extensions having been built close to boundaries (some with different roof forms to their hosts), but these are built in a way where such departures are not so readily noticeable as the current proposal.

For these reasons, the proposed extension would harm the character and appearance of the existing house and street scene, contrary to Saved Adur Local Plan Policy AH7. In this respect, policy AH7 is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework that indicates development should always seek to secure high quality design. This policy therefore carries substantial weight.

Residential amenity – effect on existing dwellings

It is the neighbours immediately to the south and east who would be principally affected by this development (the development is removed from the remainder).

Neighbour to east

Sufficient distance is retained to the neighbour to the east to avoid overbearing and overshadowing effect, and such distance ensures no unacceptable intrusive overlooking and loss of privacy would result.

Neighbour to south

This neighbouring property has several windows facing the application site. At ground floor are two windows and a set of sliding doors and there are two windows at first floor. All serve habitable rooms. Outlook from these is almost entirely dependent on the aspect facing the application property.

The diminishment of the spacing between the two buildings would severely curtail outlook and reduce the light entering these rooms. This would create oppressive living conditions for the occupiers.

Taking account of these matters, the proposed extension would cause unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the residents through impact on outlook and light. The proposal would thus be contrary to saved LP Policy AH7, insofar as relevant to this issue. This aims to ensure that development does not have an overbearing effect on adjacent property. This policy is consistent in this respect with the Framework which seeks a good standard of amenity for all future occupants of buildings, and therefore carries significant weight.

Recommendation

It is appreciated the applicant wants to maximise the living accommodation available in the house, but other proposals which are permitted development would enable a substantial increase in accommodation compared with the existing house. On balance, the need for additional accommodation does not outweigh the harmful impact on neighbours and the visual harm.

REFUSE for the reasons:-

1. By reason of its poor quality design and loss of the space between the buildings, the proposal would constitute an unsympathetic and cramped form of development that would be poorly related visually to the host dwelling and harmful to the symmetrical character and appearance of the pair of properties to which the application site belongs. The resultant ‘terracing effect’ would harm the established character of the street scene. It would therefore conflict with the ‘saved’ policy AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan, Development Control Standard No.3 ‘Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings’ and policies of the South East Plan (CC1, CC6, and BE1).

2. By reason of its proximity to the shared boundary with the neighbouring property to the south, the proposal would constitute an unneighbourly form of development that would be detrimental to the living conditions of that neighbour by way of overbearing impact and loss of light to habitable rooms. It would therefore conflict with 'saved' policy AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan AH7, and policy BE1 of the South East Plan.

Is recommendation contrary to any representations? N

Case Officer signed: Matthew Porter Date: 23 -11-2012

Authorised and signed by: Peter Barnett Date: 26-11-2012