Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0423/08 Recommendation - Refuse

Site: **269 Old Shoreham Road, Southwick BN42 4LP**

Proposal: **Two-storey side extension (including demolition of attached garage)**

The Application

The application property is the western half of a pair of semi-detached houses located on the northern side of the A270, within the built-up area of Southwick.

The house has been extensively developed in the recent past and no longer has a similar appearance to the attached hipped-roof house, the roof having been converted from a hip to a gable and large rear dormer added, all under 'permitted development rights' in 2006.

The current application proposes the demolition of the existing attached garage and the erection of a two-storey side extension. The extension would be 2.9m in width, by 4.1m in depth at ground floor level and 8.5m in depth at first floor level, by 9.0m in height to the roof apex. The main front wall of the extension would be set back from the front elevation of the building by 0.4m.

The proposals would provide a dressing room at ground floor level, and a dressing room / en-suite bathroom and study at first floor level.

Permission for a first-floor side extension (above the attached garage) and a single-storey rear/side extension (ADC/0486/06) was refused and later dismissed at appeal. The appeal inspector stated that the dwelling does not visually contribute to the amenity of the area, that the gable end and rear dormer (allowed under p.d.) were "visually crude", and that they "unbalanced the appearance of the semi-detached pair". With regard to the proposed first floor extension he felt that the "present discordant and unpleasing appearance of the frontage of No.269 would be exacerbated by the size and unsympathetic proportions of the proposed extension. That harm would be made even worse by building it flush with the existing front building line, so increasing its prominence."

The single-storey rear/side extension was later approved under ADC/0109/07. A further proposal for a two-storey side extension and conversion of the building into two flats (ADC/0457/07) was also refused. A small infill side extension was approved under ADC/0727/07.

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: The Highways Officer states that it is unlikely that the extension at the property would result in an increase in the amount of traffic in the area. The most recently available verified accident records reveal there have been no personal injury accidents in the vicinity of the existing point of access, indicating a low risk of highway safety issues with this proposal. No objection subject to a condition requiring contractors' buildings, plant and materials to be located within the site.

Third Parties: There have been no third party representations on this application.

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 policies seek to protect and, where possible enhance the character and distinctiveness of areas, requiring high standards of design, layout and construction (DEV1). Policy AH7 of the Local Plan, relation specifically to extensions and alterations to dwellings, states that they should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable loss of light or privacy or have an overbearing effect on the neighbouring dwelling and be sympathetic to the original dwelling. Supplementary Planning Guidance in DC Standard No. 3 'Extension and Alteration to Dwellings' states, amongst other things, that side extensions should usually be set back slightly from the main front wall of the dwelling to create a visual break and ensure the extension is subordinate to the main dwelling, they should be designed to closely match the existing dwelling with a roof that would match.

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 accepted.

The proposed extension under consideration is the same size as previously refused under ADC/0457/07. The main differences being that the previous application related to the split of the dwelling into two separate units of accommodation, and the internal layout and external fenestration was different.

Visual amenity

The existing pair of semi-detached dwellings has an unbalanced and discordant appearance. The gable end (built under permitted development) forms a strong vertical feature which dominates the west side roof plane to the detriment of the uniformity of the pair. It is considered that the proposed two-storey extension would only serve to exacerbate the dominance of the application house to the detriment of the pair of dwellings and the streetscene as a whole.

Whilst the proposals would be set back slightly from the front elevation of the dwelling, in response to one aspect of the appeal Inspector's conclusions on ADC/0486/06, it is still considered that the visible bulk and incongruous design compared to the other houses warrants refusal due to the adverse effect caused.

Residential amenity

The proposed extension is set well away from the side boundary of the property and from the neighbouring house (No.267). The presence of such a gap would prevent their being unacceptable loss of light or overshadowing. The outlook from first-floor of the adjacent house would be unchanged. The amount of windows in the side of the extended house would be reduced to one and (notwithstanding the incorrect details on the submitted plans) it would serve the stairwell to the rooms in the roof which in turn could be obscurely glazed.

Access and parking

Unlike previous refused applications the additional accommodation would not increase the number of bedrooms in the house (currently 7). However, there would be the loss of a parking space in the form of the attached garage. West Sussex revised parking standards only give parking standards for dwellings of up to 4 bedrooms and no more (for which a maximum of 3 spaces are required).

The previous application for a side extension of a similar size (ADC/0457/07) was refused on grounds of the increased use of the access adding to the hazards of highway users and that the site could not accommodate the increase in use proposed by the subdivision of the dwelling into 2 separate flats.

Given that this application does not propose to subdivide the dwelling and that the number of bedrooms would remain the same, it is considered that the

effect on access to the highway and on highway safety would be unchanged and would not warrant refusal on those grounds alone. However, the front garden has been converted to a substandard parking area with an unsatisfactory layout, entailing reversing onto the carriageway, with no dropped kerbs. A revised arrangement is required, in the interests of highway safety.

Recommendation

REFUSE for reason that:-

The proposed two-storey side extension would detract from, and further unbalance, the appearance of the pair of houses and would be detrimental to the streetscene thereby conflicting with the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (CH1, DEV1) and the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7).