Expiry 7-5-09

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0096/09 Recommendation - Refuse

Site: 6 Downland Avenue Southwick Brighton West Sussex

Proposal: Replacement front porch (retrospective)

The Application

The application property is the western half of a pair of semi-detached 1930's houses located on the south side of the street, within the built up area of Southwick.

The proposal is a retrospective application for a front porch. The porch is 2.5m in width, 1.3m in depth by 3m in height. The exterior of the porch is constructed with a 0.4m high rendered plinth, which has been painted taupe in colour, the main body of the porch is clad with vertical timber weather boarding, and the roof is tiled in a red concrete plain tile. The pair of entrance doors are white uPVC and obscurely glazed.

The surrounding dwellings are of similar age and construction, with design features such as painted rendered panels or tile hung panels, however the overall appearance is very similar. A number of the surrounding properties have front porches, No's 5 & 7 directly opposite, and No's 14, 20, 22, 24, and 26 to the east. Many of the porches are of different construction methods, some being brick built with glazed sliding doors, others with brick plinths standard uPVC upper halves. All of the surrounding porches have been permitted under permitted development.

The property has previously been extended with a single-storey rear extension, and rooms in the roof (with hip to gable extension and rear dormer) both under permitted development, ground floor rear extension (retrospective ADC/0155/08).

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties: There has been one letter of objection from the owner of No.4 who states that the porch is large and ugly, and that this is the second time that the owner has applied for retrospective planning permission within the past 18 months.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, DEV1

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH7 and Appendix II 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings.'
PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)

Planning Assessment

Policies
Structure Plan policies seek to protect, and where possible, enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area, requiring high standards of design, layout and construction (DEV1). Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, a loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. They should be of sympathetic design and materials to the original dwelling and the area in general.

Development Control Standard No.3 ' Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' states that front extensions are particularly difficult to incorporate successfully with the existing house and streetscene. In the case of semi-detached dwellings, front extensions will only be allowed where the extension can be successfully assimilated into the streetscene and not unduly affect neighbours.

Visual amenity
The application porch has been built with a floor area of 3.25 sqm and materials which are not of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the house, therefore planning permission is required.

The scale of the porch itself is only marginally larger that the maximum allowed under permitted development, and in purely terms of its size is not considered to be overly large or out of scale with the size of the original building. However there are many design features of the porch which result in it appearing incongruous and unsympathetic to the building and surrounding area.

The shallow pitched roof does not mimic the angle of pitch of the main roof of the house, this has the affect of giving the porch a rather squat appearance. The red tiled roof is sympathetic to the vertical tile hanging in the hip to gable extension, but not the tiles used on the original roof of the dwelling.

The main concern however, is with the exterior vertical timber cladding and fenestration of the porch. The timber cladding is not a material that is visible within the wider streetscene, and although it is likely to weather and soften in colour, it is still considered that boarding is incongruous in terms of the general pallet of materials of the surrounding houses.

The pair of uPVC doors have the appearance of patio doors rather than a single door which is the usually norm for porches. In the cases of porches with

sliding doors it is usual to be able to see the original front door and front elevation of the house beyond. In this instance the obscurely glazed pair of doors prevents any view of the original front door beyond, and serves to add to the visual bulk of the extension. It is considered that the lack of permeability through the front doors of the porch results in a more blocky appearance which in combination with the timber weatherboarding and shallow tiled roof, forms an incongruous addition to the front elevation of the house which is detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing house and the area in general.

Residential amenity

The porch does not result in a loss of amenity to the neighbouring sites through loss of light, outlook or privacy.

Recommendation

REFUSE on ground that :-

The proposal forms an obtrusive and incongruous feature that is visually out of keeping and unsympathetic to the existing house, and detrimental to the visual amenities of the locality, thereby conflicting with the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (DEV1) and Adur District Local Plan (AH7).

Case Officer: [redacted] PB 23/4/09

Date: 23.04.09.