Paul Pennicott

[redacted]

Sent: 08 December 2009 10:37
To: Paul Pennicott
Subject: Planning application Ravenswood
Importance: High
Attachments: For committee Planning Application 18 Winchester Road.docx

Richmond Road
Worthing
West Sussex
BN11 4AF

7/12/09

Mr Paul Pennicot
Development Control Manager
Worthing Borough Planning Department

Planning Application : WB/09/0932/FULL

Dear Mr Pennicott

I spoke to various people in the planning department today and eventually Marie O'Keeffe this afternoon as well as Councillor Paul High and have been informed that it is ok to submit information regarding the above application right up until the planning meeting. The reason for my concern and additional submission is that initially my partner and I tried to restrict as far as possible what we wanted to say to the preferred "one side of A4". Even going slightly over this there were still details which we had to cut out. I read the planning officer's report and assumed it was all now too late. I then received a copy of the Winchester Road Residents Association submission (with the information that individuals were still going to write individually) at four pages plus attachments and felt rather aggrieved! Thank you therefore for your department's procedures in that Mrs O'Keeffe said I could still send in comments which I attach.

Yours sincerely

Pamela Kelly

18 Winchester Road
from
Pamela Kelly

Planning Application : WB/09/0932/FULL

Dear Sirs

Please consider the following comments with regard to the planning officer's report. They follow the order of the report.

out of date map - 2st ext.

1 It is not important if the department's map is not guaranteed to scale, it gives a good idea of the layout, but it is inaccurate in being completely out of date. Open space has been lost in at least 5 gardens and it does not even show the extension on the property under consideration. The two storey extension at no 18 extends north to twice its original length, past part of the still-standing original outbuilding.

still unpit even at rear - local interest bldg.

2 In my original objection I raised the point that nowhere in government documents issued on conservation areas does it say that appearance and character are only of value at the front. Surely there must be very few remaining Victorian outbuildings in good condition and well maintained as this appears to be. We consider this a part of the social and architectural heritage of the conservation area which deserves to be preserved as showing part of our grandparents' way of life. This is strengthened by the fact that the house is recorded as being of local interest.

Shed will be needed to replace lost storage.

3 The out building is large, appears to be in good condition and presumably provides valuable storage space. If it is demolished the owner will still need storage and will then want to put up a shed, exactly as happened with his property next door at 14-16. For a house this size it will require a correspondingly large shed resulting in a further loss of green space. There are song birds including thrushes and migrating birds such as redwings which regularly visit this corner.

4 Apparently the shed at Sunkist next door is used for craft. This raises the possibility of the construction of an even larger shed than one needed for just storage.

should adapt ex accommodation (lose double bedroom?)

Enough space under new regulations? More activity if used as office

5 The existing living space is described as inadequate. If so could not another bedroom (the double) be better used as a lounge? A lot of people in care homes do not like to be moved around as I know from where my mother lives. In fact I believe the home was functioning without criticism of the space by the inspectorate well after new regulations on space came into existence. What the new area would mean is plainly that the working area as well as the living accommodation would be extended. If this were the usual entrance and exit for staff and residents at the home as it is with the conservatory/office at Sunkist Lodge this would mean a huge increase in coming and going and noise as we experience from Sunkist Lodge.

6 Access will include doors to the east and west. This means staff and residents can go in or out of the east side opposite the garden at Sunkist. This in itself would be fine but there were times in the past when staff would call to each other or residents in the opposite home and this would become more likely with the door that much nearer to Sunkist due to the

removal of the outbuilding. Unfortunately the staff often shouted and it sounded like a commercial estate rather than a residential area.

7 An additional letter of objection sent on November 1st from No 4 Shakespeare Road has not been recorded and I have been asked to make this known.

8 The conservatory may be 6 metres from No 20 but all 5 metres of the west side will be highly visible from this resident's garden.

Lack of screening - dying silver birch, deciduous planting

9 As stated there are only 2 metres to the boundary with the gardens of No 6 Shakespeare Road and the screening here is declining rapidly because of the demise of the silver birch tree. This is gradually falling down and will leave a very large gap in the screening when it is finally gone as there is a considerable volume of ivy growth. In addition most of the screening in the Shakespeare Road garden is deciduous so will afford no protection for them from autumn to spring.
The "screening" in our own garden at 51 is inadequate to block out the length of the conservatory. We can see straight down to the rear door and inner north side window now despite the shrubs because they are not bushy enough and one is semi deciduous. This door and window are clearly illuminated and fully visible as I look out this evening. We can even clearly see something as tiny as the lights from the burglar alarm. The second window will be visible from all angles as unfortunately the high growth of ivy on our wall has to be removed so that the wall can be repaired. It is only still there at the moment because the corner was home to a blackbird family and they are still eating the berries.
This cannot be described as adequate when we can clearly see staff and residents in the garden.

10 There have been objections to noise from in fact three residents , not two, in Richmond Road. In addition a grandmother at No 49 discussed with me last year concerns about the foul language I had heard that her grandchildren might overhear, although she herself is deaf and therefore has not involved herself further. Also we noticed that a resident with learning difficulties at Badgers, Nos.53/ 53a, shouted very loudly and aggressively from the end of their garden as if reacting to the noise from the Winchester Road homes. I will return to the issue of noise later.

11 The planning officer considers in some detail the appearance of the proposed conservatory "to achieve a design in sympathy with its historic context", yet strangely does not consider the very sympathetic and genuinely historical out building as being important. (Likewise the bay window is a very attractive feature but some distance down on the side and can be seen by almost no-one, while the new conservatory will take up a very large space and be seen by a large number of people who may well have been influenced to live there by the existence of rare open space.)

Previously 15 places now 18 -; 17 would be an intensification

12 I would suggest to the committee that the details about previous numbers of residents be checked with the inspectorate. The West Sussex Care Guide 2007/8 for the period when the home was last open states that it had 15 places, not 18. If the guide is accurate and the new application for registration is to be for 17 this is an expansion and addition to the numbers of people in care already. This would further shift the imbalance in the local environment.

I read the report by CSCI at the time that Ravenswood was classed as unsatisfactory and closed down. The reasons were as I remember to do with resident's welfare, not space. I have tried to double-check this and have asked the CQC to e-mail me a copy of the report.

Conclusion.

Unfortunately I have to strongly disagree with the planning officer's conclusion that the conservatory would not be harmful to neighbours' living conditions. Our experience has been that the extraordinary acoustics in the immediate area allow sound to amplify and travel right up to the rear of the surrounding houses and flats. We have not been able to use our rear garden for the last four years because of the noise from these neighbouring care homes. When we called round to Sunkist we were greeted with a lack of concern and continued noisy conversations even the following day. I wrote repeatedly to the registered owner and sent copies to CSCI and the Environmental Health Department. Our contact with this Department was not just an occasional phone call if there was a bit of noise. It was about a situation which had caused us both to dread coming home after work and turned our garden into a no-go area leading to a month-long log last year for the EHD. Before Ravenswood closed the residents were clearly audible in the garden and the language could be very unpleasant. Even if there were enough staff actually present to supervise it would be difficult to calm down those who swear at each other. On one occasion a resident shouted constantly for a full 15 minutes for the commode. You cannot entertain the idea of having friends round to enjoy the surroundings.

Noisy conversations

Env. Health

This year I was away in August and worried about coming back. We again had to complain to Sunkist and the EHD because we were driven out in the evening by noise. This is an infringement of our own rights and wellbeing. If the conservatory is built it will mean far more residents occupying this space for much longer. Our experience of the conservatory at Sunkist Lodge next door is that when residents are in the garden they are now even closer to our boundary and often sound as if they are in our own or our neighbour's garden. We can hear entire conversations and this has often been quite personal. It has been at all times of the day whatever the season, often around 10.00 pm. The conservatory is an office but used for day long coming and going and chat. The windows are inevitably open so that sound carries clearly, as well as when the door is open. It will be obvious that I see the proposal from the Winchester Road Residents Association as an absolute disaster for anyone trying to live a normal life at the rear of Ravenswood where a similar situation is likely to develop but made worse by restriction to the rear of the house.

Sunkist problems - conservatory / office

The light from the conservatory at Sunkist lodge reflects around the walls, often all night. The floodlights have often been left on all night. Even when they are not on in the conservatory the lights from the adjoining room spill into the garden, usually all night. Similarly the floodlights in the rear garden at Ravenswood were often on all night and my

lighting - ex conservatory + floodlights

neighbour told me this kept her awake. If the conservatory is built this will have its own lights and there will be **two** doors into the main building for light to spill out where we see the lighted windows at the moment even though the home is closed.

staff breaks nearer to boundary (smoking, phone calls)

The staff will need to use the area nearer the boundaries for their breaks as they come outside to smoke and make phone calls. They are often loud and I was very embarrassed to be in the garden on one occasion when one woman was on her phone having an angry private conversation of which I could hear every word.

I believe that all of this does seriously harm the character of the Conservation Area as we have frequently heard the noise of residents while in their rear garden when walking down the neighbouring roads. Care home accommodation is needed but there are 112 care homes within a 5 mile radius. This is a semi circle not a full circle because of the sea and therefore the density is intensified. To compound this the concentration of mental health problems is completely disproportionate and harmful to neighbours, the closest of whom are now suffering considerable stress themselves. There is no point in simply preserving the facade of the buildings while allowing an unpleasant atmosphere to develop for passing pedestrians as well.

Pamela Kelly (resident since 1995)

51 Richmond Road
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22/11/09

WORTHING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING SECTION
RECEIVED 24 NOV 2009
Comp. | In Report (D/C)
Addm. | Post Addm.

Development Control Manager
Mr P Pennicott

Planning Application : WB/09/0932/FULL

Dear Mr Pennicott

I am writing to object to this proposal on several grounds. It will have considerable effects on neighbouring properties but will neither preserve nor enhance the appearance and character of the conservation area, quite the opposite.

1. No 18 already has a considerable 2 storey extension at the rear which **doubled** the length of the original western elevation alongside no. 20 (yet is not even shown on the Conservation Area map ©2009). The conservatory will add here another 5 metres and will greatly impact on no. 20 and others close by. Even if not visible from Winchester Road it will certainly be plainly visible from the pavements of Shakespeare and Richmond Roads and to residents at 4 & 6 Shakespeare Road and 47, 49, 51 & 53 Richmond Road. This can only be considered as overdevelopment: in total another 50m² taking the building's footprint well over the average published in the Winchester Road Conservation Area Appraisal as being about 1/3 of the land attached to each house.

2. The demolition of an attractive, original, gabled outbuilding to be replaced by a UPVC structure will dramatically change the rear outlook for all properties at the western end of the Winchester/ Richmond/ Shakespeare Road block. Surely this is not in line with Policy BE1 of the Local Plan? Nowhere does it say in the information on conservation areas that appearance and character are to be considered only from the front. The new structure will invade the open, green rear space and detract from the character of this end of the block.

3. The character of the area itself will be affected by light and noise as this will obviously become the major living area for residents of the home, not an optional and occasional extra for summer use, being 1½ times the size of the current living area from which it will directly lead for all year use. This is not extending the accommodation "within" the home as stated in the application and the increase in noise from a large number of residents and staff effectively living in the garden area will be easily audible from the road. When Ravenswood was in use before its current closure there were often during the day lengthy periods of music which would be pushed further outside the boundaries by the conservatory, whether double glazed or not.

At night there was frequent floodlighting which kept awake an elderly neighbour. The light from a conservatory will be considerable and prolonged in this currently green space, given the dark afternoons and evenings in early spring /autumn let alone winter. Although marked N/A in the application light pollution is inevitable.

4. During 2008 and 2009 we were forced to contact the applicant, Sunkist Homes Ltd., as well as the Environmental Health Department about constant intolerable noise levels and unacceptable language and conversation topics from the garden and conservatory at the applicant's address,

Sunkist Lodge, no's 14-16 adjacent to the proposed development at no 18. We did refer also to the noise from residents and staff at no 18 when it increased to similarly intrusive levels. Unfortunately personal visits as well as letters made very little difference until the very recent past. In fact at least one patient reacted with challenging behaviour. The council states that "An application for Conservation Area consent is a matter of public interest". The noise from Sunkist Lodge could be heard on several occasions as far away as the roadways of Shakespeare and Richmond Roads.

5. Unfortunately the issue of mental health or alcohol problems is a matter of public interest if patients are in residential areas with nothing to occupy their time. The provision of accommodation for those with health problems, mental or physical, should be considered in view of the whole community so that there is a balance, it should not be at the expense of the mental wellbeing of the wider community or it will be self defeating.

Official statistics show that this parish, recorded as containing a very high proportion of deprived and vulnerable households, contains an excessive number of care homes (53 for this one parish).The character of any area is not enhanced and the community can be harmed by thoughtless expansion of care homes (particularly given the preponderance of those for mental health problems so incredibly close to each other). This is not nimbyism: it is not a healthy environment for the community *or* the needy individuals when the balance is so skewed. We need care homes but the duty is with the owners and management to operate in a responsible and considerate manner and with the council to ensure this. The Council's department for Planning, Regeneration and **Wellbeing** has allowed this imbalance and should now be very careful to control the use and planning of all care homes in the residential environment.

6. Finally the development will be very visually intrusive in our personal environment, directly facing the rear of our own house and visible face-on from all 6 windows and doors. Another access door at no 18 will be revealed by the demolition. (It has to be said that even double glazing has not kept out the noise from Sunkist Lodge.)This will also cause total loss of privacy in our own rear garden.

I would appreciate your careful consideration of all these points.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Pamela Kelly