Expiry 24/05/07

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0186/07 **Recommendation - Permit**

Site: **36 Firle Road Lancing West Sussex BN15 0NZ**

Proposal: **Rooms in roof (with part-hipped side gable and front and rear dormers)**

The Application

The application site is located on the northern side of Firle Road. The site contains a single storey semi-detached dwelling with a hipped roof. The building has been extended to the rear with a flat roofed single storey extension and has also had a terrace constructed on the front elevation. The site slopes relatively steeply up hill from the road towards the rear and gently downhill across the site from east the west.

The previous owner gained permission in 2003 (L/204/03) to construct rooms in the roof, including front and rear dormers (both 3.3 metres wide) and a side velux window in the hipped end and to extend the front terrace. Aside from the front terrace, this permission has not been implemented to date. An earlier application for rooms in the roof with front, rear and side gables was withdrawn prior to a decision being made.

The applicant now proposes an alternative plan to construct rooms in the roof, including front and rear dormers and an extension of the roof to a part hipped gable end. The main line of the roof will extend to the west by 2.6 metres and have a hip with a length of 1.9 metres. The front and rear dormer windows will be 4.5 and 5.4 metres wide respectively and will both be 1.9 metres high and 2.1 metres deep. The additional space will be used to create three extra bedrooms and an en-suite bathroom.

The application site is among four pairs of semi-detached bungalows located on the north side of the street (Nos. 26-40). The majority of the others already have rooms in the roof. The proposed extensions have been designed to match No. 32 which has been extended to a part hipped gable end and flat roofed front and rear dormers. Other front dormers have been established on Nos. 34, 26 and 24 (L/126/03) and rear dormers on Nos. 34, 28 (L/115/97) and 24 (L/126/03).

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties

Two letters of objections have been received from the residents of the two immediately neighbouring properties.

The main issues raised by the residents of No. 38 (the dwelling to the west) are:

- A proposed development for this site was rejected in 2003 due to intrusion of privacy and little if anything has changed on this aspect.
- The proposed window in the side gable will overlook and allow an intrusive line of sight directly down on four windows in the side wall of their bungalow (these being kitchen, toilet, bathroom and bedroom windows).
- The proposed window in the side gable will allow visual access into their rear garden, removing privacy and having its appealing nature tarnished by potential voyeuristic activities.
- The proposed rear dormer window will also overlook the garden should the existing hedging be removed from the side boundaries.
- The monstrous sizing of the dormer/gable extension is not in keeping with the other bungalows in the road.
- It will block out a substantial amount of natural light received through the windows on the east side of the property.
- As the application site is on a higher level, this uncharacteristic dwarfing would create a real eyesore in what is a lovely looking neighbourhood.
- The existing property has a bathroom with no natural light or a window so surely there is no need for a window on the newly planner smaller bathroom.
- The front dormer windows will result in a loss of privacy to the front bedroom of the bungalow opposite this site.

The main issues raised by the residents of No. 34 (the attached dwelling to the east) are:

- The part hipped side gable will look lopsided on the semi-detached property.
- It would be overpowering and very dominating against No. 38 which is a much lower property.
- No. 38 has side windows which would be overlooked by the window in the side gable. This was the reason the original application was turned down 3 years ago and nothing has changed.
- Even if the bathroom window was required to be of fixed obscured glass, there is nothing stopping the owners from changing this at a later date.
- At present the existing bathroom at No. 36 does not have a window as it is in the middle of the house. Therefore, why does the new bathroom need a window at all?
- If the existing hedge in front of No. 29 was to be trimmed or removed, the window in the side gable would look directly into the bedroom of this bungalow.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur District Local Plan: AG1, AH7

Development Control Standard No. 3 "Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings"
West Sussex Structure Plan: DEV1

Planning Assessment

The Appearance
The enlargement of the roof space into a part hipped gable end will have an unbalancing effect on the pair of semi-detached dwellings as the attached dwelling (No. 34) retains its original hipped roof line. However, this style roof is consistent with other dwellings which have been extended in the street (most notably No. 32 which neighbours the pair to the east) and will not have a significant detrimental effect on the character of the street scene. The inclusion of a part hip in the gable end is an appropriate design to maintain some degree of symmetry to the semi-detached pair.

The proposed front and rear dormer windows are both of a scale considered to be appropriate for the size of the dwelling and roof space and set down well below the ridgeline.

The proposed front dormer window will be wider than that existing on the attached dwelling but of the same height, depth and design. As the roof space is proposed to be widened as part of this application, some extra width on the dormer window is justified without creating a significant "mismatch" with the neighbouring dormer, as the other proportions will still be the same. The visual effects of the front dormer window on the street scene will be minor as there is already several others constructed within this group of dwellings, as noted above.

Effects on Neighbours
The main concern expressed by the neighbouring residents is the effects on privacy caused by overlooking from the various windows proposed.

It is acknowledged that the proposed window in the side gable end will generally look down at the side elevation of the dwelling at No. 38 and could potentially reduce privacy into the non-obscured principal windows on that elevation. However, the window is proposed to serve a small second bathroom rather than any principal room. The applicants have verbally agreed to this window being obscured to retain their own privacy as well as that of residents of the neighbouring dwelling. The overlooking potential can be further reduced by a condition on the approval requiring that this window is fixed shut except for a top hung window. This will reduce opportunities for residents to be able to "hang" out the window and potentially look into the neighbouring dwelling windows but still allow adequate ventilation of the bathroom.

The rear dormer windows will directly overlook the applicant's own rear garden. There will be no looking into any neighbouring or rear windows. Whilst there is some potential for overlooking of parts of the rear gardens of

the two neighbouring properties, this will not be direct overlooking and the side boundaries are currently well screened by trees and bushes.

The DC standard does not contain specific standards with regards to overlooking of dwellings on the opposite side of a street from front windows but it is considered appropriate to apply the 22 metre separation between principal windows used to determine the acceptability of rear windows. In the case of No. 29 (which is the main concern of the objectors), this dwelling is over 25 metres away from the application dwelling and therefore considered not to be affected by overlooking to a significant degree.

The second concern raised by the resident's of No. 38 was the loss of light in the side windows caused by the extension of the roof. The two dwellings are generally located on an even level but with No. 38 orientated slightly away at the rear following the general curve of the road. The two dwellings are separated by a shared driveway which is approximately 7 metres in width.

The side elevation of the neighbouring dwelling is already shaded to a degree by the application dwelling and this will not be excessively increased. It is considered that this good separation between the buildings will still allow adequate light to be received particularly into the principal rooms (bedroom and kitchen) which are located at either end of the elevation.

In terms of the building appearing to be overpowering and dominating to No. 38 due to the neighbouring property being on a much lower level, it is noted that the side elevation of No. 38 is only slightly down hill of No. 36. The effect would be almost identical to that which already exists between Nos. 34 and 32 as No. 32 has been extended in the same manner as that proposed and the relationship between the dwellings is generally the same. Due to the good separation between the two dwellings and the part hip in the gable end, there is no significant overbearing effect.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that :- 1PPi

Conditions

1. C1Ci
2. C12Ei
3. C18Civ ... west side elevation of the gable extension ...

Case Officer: .....

Date: 2/05/07

2/5

Head of Planning & Community Division: ..... Peter Davies .....

Date: ..... 3 5 07 .....

Chairman of Planning & Regulatory Committee: ... A. J. Mills .....

Date: ..... 14/05/07 .....