Application Number: ADC/0451/08 Recommendation - APPROVE

Site: 58 Old Fort Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5HA

Proposal: Replacement detached dwellinghouse (three-storey four-bedroom 'Eco' house)

The Application

The application property is situated on the south side of Old Fort Road, obliquely opposite the roundabout at the end of Shingle Road. It is to the south east of the roundabout, being the second plot eastwards from the gap giving access to the beach.
The dwelling was originally built as a bungalow in the late 1940s and has since been extended with rooms in the roof with front and rear dormers and flat roofed single-storey front extensions. As with the other properties on this side of Old Fort Road, the dwelling is set back with a large front forecourt/garden.
On the west side is a chalet bungalow, which was originally of similar style but has since been extensively re-modelled and extended. To the east is a large detached two-storey 'Georgian' style house built in the 1960s.

The application site has a small rear garden. This was extended under planning permission SU/70/97/TP which granted permission for the applicant to use and enclose part of the open area at the rear (within his ownership and not part of the public beach) as part of his rear garden.

Planning permission was granted in 2005 (SU/212/05/TP) for the remodelling of the bungalow to create new first floor and rear dormers, front extensions and rear balcony. The proposals were of a 'Spanish' style, with a front turret-like feature, and were considered acceptable in this location as the design would add interest to the streetscene. This permission is valid until November 2010.

The current application seeks permission to demolish the existing bungalow and replace it with a detached flat-roofed three-storey, four-bedroom house of contemporary design and materials. It is described by the applicant as a 'Eco-house'. Solar panels are proposed for hot water and heating along with a rainwater harvesting tank.

Proposed at the front of the house is a flat-roofed garage and an enclosed, open air courtyard with the main front entrance. On the ground floor are three bedrooms and bathrooms, a utility room and hallway with staircase. At first floor level, the floorspace reduces and accommodates an open plan living/kitchen/dining space. Glazing is shown to the rear with a balcony the full width of the first floor, and there is a small balcony to the front above the existing flat roof garage. A master bedroom with ensuite is shown at second floor level also with a full width balcony to the rear.

As submitted, the house would have a maximum depth of 21.8 metres and maximum width of 13 metres. It would be tiered with each storey set in from the front, rear and sides of the storey beneath (except for the first two storeys on the west side). The maximum height of the flat roof of the proposed building is 8.3 metres, intended to match the ridge height of the adjacent house to the east (which is the same overall height as the previously approved ridge-roofed 'Spanish-style' scheme). The house is shown set in from the

boundary to the east by 0.5 metres and to the west by 1.2 metres; which is a slightly reduced width compared to the previous scheme.

The building is proposed to be finished with silicone white-coloured render to all floors, with specific details of the colour and appearance to be submitted and approved prior to commencement of works.

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: No objection. The Transport Planning Officer states that the proposal will use the existing access and there should be little intensification of vehicular traffic as a result of this proposal. The number of parking spaces proposed exceeds the adopted maximum parking standard (which is 3 spaces for a 4-bed house). Any approval should be subject to conditions in relation to temporary storage of construction plant/materials and car parking layout details. As it is a substitute scheme, no transport contribution is required.

Environment Agency: No objection.

Third Parties: 4 letters have been received from nearby residents at No's 56 & 116 Old Fort Road and Flats 9 & 11 Beach Court. They raise the following issues: -

- The residents of the Beach Court flats state that the proposed house would be out of keeping with other houses/properties in the area and that the flat roof appears to be higher than adjoining dwellings; an artist's impression would be useful.
- The neighbours to the east at No.56 comment that their only concern is overlooking and loss of privacy that could occur as a result of the two south-facing balconies (onto lounge and bathroom); the existing dwelling has no balconies. The proposed balcony screens are angled, thereby allowing some sideways view, and this needs to be rectified.
- The resident at No.116 comments that the solar panels are shown flat whereas they would only be effective if they a tilted; this would increase the height of the building above those nearby and would expose the back of the supporting framework to the street and flats opposite which would be visually unacceptable.

Additional comment is made that the rear garden has been extended beyond legal boundary, onto the protected beach.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, NE1, CH1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No. 2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats'
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2003 and ADC 2004)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005) and Supplement 'Planning and Climate Change'
PPS3 'Housing' (DCLG 2006)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policies give weight to making the best use of land provided that the impact on the character of the area and environment is acceptable (LOC1, ERA1, CH1). Policy DEV1, entitled high quality development, states that development should not be permitted unless the construction, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping are of high quality taking into account the need to, amongst other things, integrate with and where possible enhance adjoining land uses; have regard to context including site characteristics, townscape/streetscape, views into and out of the site and building styles/materials; give high priority to pedestrians and reduce dominance of cars; create a high quality socially-inclusive adaptable environment; protect and enhance biodiversity; ensure energy efficiency; and meet the needs of service providers.
Policy DEV4 states (amongst other things) that development should not be permitted unless the travel needs it generates are met; it achieves safe and convenient access by a choice of means of travel; it encourages and enables an increase in walking and cycling.

Local Plan policy AH2 relates to new residential development (by way of infilling and redevelopment) and states that new dwellings should be designed so that their appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live and are in keeping with and enhance the existing local environment with particular attention being paid to architectural form, height, materials, density, layout of buildings and hardsurfaced areas; they do not have an unneighbourly effect due to loss of privacy; daylight/sunlight; outlook or open space, incorporating adequate standards of residential amenity for the new dwellings in terms of amenity space, daylight, outlook and privacy; access and parking provision meets the adopted standards; and they accord with the Council's DC Standard No.2 'Space around New Dwellings and Flats'

Government policy guidance in PPS3 encourages best use of urban land for housing development, particularly affordable housing and a mixture of types to create a balanced community, at higher densities (avoiding developments at less than 30 dwellings per hectare) and without rigid application of parking and amenity space standards. However, it also seeks to improve the quality and attractiveness of residential areas and urges imaginative designs and layouts which make more efficient and sustainable use of land without compromising the quality of the environment. PPS1 states:-

> "Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."

PPS3 also states that Councils should "facilitate good design by identifying the distinctive features that define the character of a particular local area..... ...Careful attention to design is particularly important where the chosen local strategy involves intensification of the existing urban fabric... .....successful intensification need not mean high rise development or low quality accommodation with inappropriate space.....The density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring a replication of existing style of form.....If done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment."

PPS1 encourages the prudent use of natural resources, sustainable consumption of resources and use of renewable energy sources.

Residential Amenity

As stated above, the neighbouring dwellings either side are, to the west, No.56 Old Fort Road, a chalet bungalow, and, to the east, No.60, a large two-storey hip-roofed house. To the rear (south) is the beach and, on the opposite side of the road (north) are a two-storey flat-roofed house with a front balcony, which is directly opposite. To the east of this is a pitch-roofed two-storey house and, to the west, a three-storey flat-roofed block of flats (Beach Court) on the corner of Shingle Road. Due to the set back position of the proposed house, these buildings opposite are at a minimum distance of 40 metres away; therefore, no loss of privacy or overbearing impact would result.

As to the effect on No.56, there is a distance of 1 metre between the proposed house and the side boundary with No.56. The height and bulk of the proposed house will be significantly greater than the existing chalet bungalow on the application site and it will exceed the height of No.56 by approximately 1.8m. Windows are proposed in the side elevation but all will be fitted with obscured glass and fixed to be permanently non-openable, thus avoiding overlooking to the side from the house itself. No.56 has a single-storey extension which abuts the boundary but it has no facing side windows. There are two dormer windows which face onto the site but these are not main windows and one is obscurely glazed. The degree of loss of light to these windows as a result of the proposed building would not be such as to warrant refusal.

The owners of No.56 have expressed concern over the proposed rear balconies resulting in loss of privacy to their rear first-floor windows. The plans show privacy screens to the side (obscurely glazed) at a maximum height of 1.8m but angled down to only 1m at their rear edge, thus enabling a sideway view. Amended plans have been requested to show the privacy screens at a height of 1.8m throughout to overcome this problem. A condition needs to be imposed requiring details of the balcony screening to be submitted and approved prior to commencement of works.

As to the effect on No.60, to the east, this house has a first-floor secondary window in its facing side which serves a bedroom. However, there is a larger rear window (facing south) and thus there is no problem of unacceptable loss of light or overbearing impact in this case. Subject to the revised balcony screen referred to above, there will be no loss of privacy as the eastern side elevation of the proposed house would have windows all to be obscurely glazed and permanently non-openable.

The existing side boundary walls are to remain, providing adequate screening between the properties. The rear garden will remain unchanged and there will be landscaping to the front of the dwelling with parking and turning space laid out.

Visual Amenity

The overall design of the proposed house differs very greatly from the existing bungalow on the site and from the neighbouring dwellings either side, as well as from the 'Spanish style' dwelling granted permission under application SU/212/05/TP which is still valid. It will not sit comfortably between the existing buildings. Nevertheless, Old Fort Road as a whole has a very eclectic mix of properties of widely varying designs and styles, juxtaposed with

one another, including some flat-roofed houses (NB. an additional flat-roofed storey was recently approved to the flat-roofed house at No.32 under ADC/0284/07).

The existing bungalow to be demolished has a poor appearance owing to a front extension that is out of keeping with its original design. Although the previously approved scheme was of pitch-roofed design, its style, finish and detailing would have produced a prominent building not particularly harmonious with its neighbours. In the case of the present proposal, the flat-roofed shape and its mass will contrast even more so, particularly in comparison with No.56 which has been extensively remodelled to create a very traditional appearance albeit one that is not characteristic of the locality.

On balance, taking account of its sustainable credentials, it is considered that, in principle, the general flat-roofed form of proposed building, with its 'tiered' arrangement and contemporary style, is acceptable in this location. However, it is considered that it is essential that it is amended in order to reduce its mass and lessen its otherwise stark visual impact.

There is concern over the prominence of the proposed building within the streetscene particularly when approaching the site from the west, from the opposite side of the roundabout. The main bulk of the building is shown set forward of the main front walls of the neighbouring dwellings either side and, given its greater bulk (owing to the flat-roofed secondfloor), it would be visually overdominant. Amended plans have been sought to seek to reduce the visual impact of the building by setting it back in line with the main part of the chalet bungalow to the west and the setting the top floor further back. The rear of the building needs to remain as originally proposed, so the overall depth of the proposed building needs to be reduced.

It has also been agreed that some changes to the detailing and fenestration should be made to add some interest to the building when viewed from the road. Drawings have been sought to show details of the appearance and finishes of the building and how it will appear within the streetscene. Amended and additional plans are awaited.

Access and Parking

The vehicular access from Old Fort Road will remain as existing. The applicant has clarified that there will be parking provided for three cars, two in the double garage and one in the driveway, a revised block plan has been submitted to show this, with turning space shown. There will also be space for cycle storage in the garage.

Recommendation

Subject to receipt of satisfactory amended plans (showing building reduced in depth and set back and changes to design detailing and balcony screens), APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed development is within the built up area and would help meet the need for sustainable housing without detracting from the existing local urban environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2) and the West Sussex Structure Plan (LOC1, NE1, CH1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5)

REFUSED by Committee
1. BSAR
2. BSCR

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)
2. C8Biii (Parking spaces to be provided and retained)(amended)
3. C9N (Temporary provision for contractors' vehicles, materials, etc on the site)
4. C12Ai (Details of external materials for walls and roof of building to be approved)
5. C14A3 (Permission relates to amended plans)
6. C14H (Existing building to be demolished prior to development)
7. C18C (Windows in east and west side elevations of building to be fitted permanently with obscured glass and be non-openable)
8. C18Eii (No additional windows to be formed in the side walls without planning permission) (amended)
9. C18K (Provision for waste storage)
10. Prior to occupation of the proposed house, obscure-glazed privacy screens shall be provided on either side of the proposed rear balconies in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. These screens shall be 1.8m in height above the floor level of the balcony to which they relate and shall be retained permanently.
11. Details of the siting, scale and appearance of the solar panels shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA prior to their installation in accordance with such details as approved.

.....