Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application seeks retrospective consent for a single-storey rear extension to a semi-detached bungalow on the east side of Lynchmere Avenue. The extension is 4 metres deep and 7.1 metres wide finished in white-painted render with a flat roof, 3.1 metres high. A roof lantern is centrally positioned within the flat roof (1.4 metres deep and 4 metres wide). There is a 2.7 metre wide high level, obscure-glazed window on the north side elevation. There is a window and French doors (with side lights) in the east elevation, facing onto the rear garden.

The extension replaces an earlier rear conservatory. The property has been previously enlarged by front and rear dormers. There is a detached garage set back into the rear garden accessed by a drive on the south side of the property.

The attached bungalow to the north (No.20) has not been extended at the rear. The adjoining bungalow (No.16) to the south occupies lower ground further and has been enlarged on the north side of the rear elevation by a pitched–roof rear extension.

Consultations

Lancing Parish Council: To be reported verbally at the meeting.

Representations

2 letters of objection have been received from the adjoining neighbours at No.16 and 20 Lynchmere Avenue raising the following concerns (which have been summarised):-

(i) The extension creates an unpleasant outlook from the dining room of No.16 appearing as a huge dominating block and reducing the amount of natural daylight which results in an oppressive and claustrophobic feeling;

(ii) The extension is overbearing and overshadows the patio at No.20 causing a loss of light and spoiling the pleasant environment that was previously enjoyed;

(iii) Had the applicant sought proper advice as to the need for planning permission (and Building Regulations), this situation would not have occurred. It has caused neighbours who are not in good health a great deal of stress.

Relevant Planning Policies

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’
South East Plan (GOSE 2009): CC1, CC6, BE1
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The property lies within the built-up area and there is no objection in principle to the extension which constitutes up-grading of the existing housing stock. The relevant considerations are the effects on the residential and visual amenities of the locality.

Visual amenity

The extension is 'set in' marginally from the south side wall of the bungalow and the common boundary with the attached bungalow, No.20. Its scale and flat-roofed design is considered a satisfactory form of extension to the rear of this property. The roof of the extension is no higher than the eaves of the original bungalow. Glimpsed views of the side wall are possible along the drive to the south side of the application property, but the extension does not appear as a prominent feature within the street scene.

An adequate amount of rear garden is retained, in excess of 15 metres deep.

Residential amenity

Saved Local Plan Policy AH7 states that extensions will be expected to be designed so that proposals would not result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, loss of natural light or overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance contained in Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings' states that:- *"On semi-detached or terraced dwellings single storey extensions which abut , or are within 1m of a common side boundary with an attached dwelling, should normally be no deeper than 3.5m."*

In this case the extension, as built, exceeds the above Standard by 0.5 metres. Nevertheless, each application should be considered on its merits. In this case, the upper part of the extension projects above the boundary fence with No.20 by approximately 1 metre. The attached property has not been extended at ground-floor level. Openings in the nearest part of the rear elevation of No.20 comprise a pair of patio doors serving a dining area. There is a step down into the rear garden. A small area of concrete adjacent to the common boundary is used as a sitting out area, with a table and chairs.

Due to its orientation and depth in relation to the common boundary, the extension has had a pronounced enclosing effect on the rear of the attached bungalow, reducing the amount of daylight and sunlight received, and detracting from the outlook from the dining room. The 'bulk' of the extension dominates the small patio area close to the rear of No.20 and detracts from its enjoyment. This unneighbourly impact is further exacerbated by the high-level window, which projects above the fence-line on the north side. Although this window, which is obscure glazed and fixed, does not allow overlooking of the rear garden or accommodation of the neighbouring property, it contributes to the intrusive effect of the extension, particularly when the room is illuminated during the evening and night time.

A single-storey extension of the same height and form in proximity to the common boundary could have been erected as 'permitted development', that is, without requiring planning permission, had its depth not exceeded 3 metres. It is acknowledged that such an extension would also have had an enclosing and overshadowing impact on the rear of No.20, but the unneighbourly effects of an extension built as 'permitted development' would not have been so severe as currently exists.

The adjoining property to the south, No.16, is sited further down the hill on lower ground than the application property by approximately 0.6 metres. It has been enlarged historically by a single-storey rear extension. A window in the north side of the original bungalow, serving a dining/sitting room, faces onto the side of application property at a distance of approximately 4.5 metres. The boundary is defined by a low wall and shrubs in the form of a loose hedge within the curtilage of No.16. The 'bulk' of the rear extension at No.18 has had some impact on the outlook from, and the reception of daylight to, this north-facing window. However, in view of the distance separating these properties, the physical effect cannot be considered to be overbearing, notwithstanding the difference in ground levels. Nor is the effect on the receipt of daylighting to the window at No.16 substantially worse than would have occurred had the extension been built at a depth of 3 metres utilising 'permitted development' entitlements, or if the applicant were to erect taller boundary treatment (up to 2 metres high) as 'permitted development'.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the reason:-

By reason of its design and excessive depth in proximity to the common boundary, the single-storey rear extension has a detrimental impact on the residential amenities of No.20 Lynchmere Avenue resulting in an unduly dominant and intrusive effect on the rear outlook from the dining room, and detracting from the enjoyment of the adjacent sitting out area in the rear garden. The development therefore conflicts with saved policy AH7 of the Adur District Local Plan and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance contained in Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'.