**Application Number: ADC/0222/08 Recommendation – REFUSE**

**Site: 18 Osborne Close, Sompting BN15 9UZ**

**Proposal: Two-bedroom bungalow (with room in roof) to side of existing dwelling**

## The Application

The application site comprises the southern half of a pair of semi-detached bungalows located on the west side of Osborne Close. The property is at the southern end of the cul-de-sac and has a front and side garden screened from the street by tall hedging. A small garage sits in the front garden behind the hedge whilst a pitch roofed extension has been added to the rear elevation of the bungalow. The site is adjoined by bungalows to the south and west that front Edwin Close and Western Road respectively. Opposite is a terrace of houses.

This proposal seeks permission to add a separate two-bedroom bungalow in the form of an extension to the south side of the existing bungalow. It would be 4.9 metres wide, continuing the line of the existing ridged roof and following the rear building line. The front elevation will protrude 0.3 metres forward of the existing bungalow, with a slightly lower eaves line. The side wall is shown 0.5m-0.8m from the southern side boundary with No.7 Edwin Close. No clear subdivision of the plot is marked on the plan (by means of a red line).

The garage is to be demolished and the front garden laid out with either 3 or 4 on-site parking spaces, plus a shared waste/recycling store. The access will be shared and there is no clear indication as to whether there would be any plot subdivision at the front but the rear garden will be subdivided to provide 53 square metres of private rear garden space for the new bungalow (and 60sqm for the existing bungalow). Windows and doors will be front and rear facing whilst a small bathroom window will be included in the southern side elevation.

The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application states that the dwelling has been designed with a single disabled person in mind. The preference is for one parking space for the new dwelling, with one space for the existing bungalow plus one visitor space.

## Consultations and Representations

***West Sussex County Council:*** No objection subject to a section 106 Obligation requiring a contribution of £1,840 to sustainable transport improvements in the area.

***Sompting Parish Council:*** No comments received.

***Third Parties:*** 2 letters have been received. The resident of No.16 Osborne Close has objected on grounds that the development will have only a single access point to serve two dwellings and will cause extra traffic and parking problems, noise and disturbance.
The resident of No.24 Western Road North has objected on grounds of overlooking and loss of privacy.
***[NB: The resident of No.16 Osborne Close has requested to speak at the Committee meeting]***

**Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance**

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, NE1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2, AH5 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)
PPS3 ' Housing' (DCLG 2006)

**Planning Assessment**

***Policies***

The site is located within a residential part of the built-up area of Sompting and the proposal constitutes infilling as provided for in both Structure and Local Plan policies. There is no objection in principle to infill development within the built-up area and, in order to meet the housing requirements of the approved Structure Plan and Local Plan, a significant proportion of housing development by way of 'unidentified' small infill sites is necessary.

Structure Plan policies give significant weight to making the best use of land through higher density development provided that the impact on the character of the area and environment is acceptable (LOC1, ERA1, CH1) and subject to policy DEV1 requiring high quality development. Policy NE1 requires the provision of new residential developments of sizes, types and tenures to suit the varied needs of local households and to minimise the need to develop Greenfield sites. Policy DEV4 states (amongst other things) that development should not be permitted unless the travel needs it generates are met. DEV5 states that "Development should not be permitted unless the level of parking is compatible with the need to avoid environmental or safety problems and the need is to encourage walking, cycling and the use of passenger transport where this is or can be a realistic alternative". The explanatory text refers to a transport contributions methodology (now adopted as TAD payments to sustainable transport improvements).

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."

***Density, Character and Visual Amenity***

Government advice in PPS3 is that new development should normally achieve a minimum density of 30dph. This is already achieved in this vicinity as the existing bungalows are at a net density of approximately 38 dwellings per hectare (dph). The site itself is at 26dph net. By contrast, the proposed new dwelling would be at a density of 63dph which is very much higher, being higher than even the 5 terraced houses opposite with communal garage compound (44dph).

The character of the area is mainly defined by modest semi-detached bungalows of similar design and plot size. The proposal would add a much smaller new dwelling on a markedly narrower plot, thus not fitting in with the

existing established pattern of bungalow development. The existing bungalow plots are mainly about 10m wide but the proposed bungalow would be on a plot only 5.5m wide (leaving the existing bungalow on a 7.8m wide plot).

The site is currently largely screened from view from the street by tall hedging. However, this may not remain the case in future if future owners wish to remove it. The proposed building would continue the lines of the existing semi-detached pair and would have the general appearance of an extension with matching materials. However, it would extend the width of the semi-detached pair into a terrace and would be cramped against the south side boundary. This would spoil the character and appearance of the bungalows (although it should be noted that there is the terrace of houses opposite to the east).

***Residential Amenity***

The proposed new dwelling is shown sited with less than the minimum 1 metre wide separation gap from the southern boundary, thus not meeting the requirements of the Council's DC Standard No.2.

Although the distance from the bungalows to the rear, at approximately 16m, is no worse than with the other existing bungalows, it falls well short of the Council's minimum standard of 22m. There would be some potential for overlooking of the bungalows to the rear (No's 20 & 22 Western Road North) although, with only rooflights for the firstfloor bedroom, it would not be severe and these could be required to be obscure glazed. There would only be an obscurely-glazed bathroom window in the southern side elevation and no loss of privacy or overdomination would be caused to No.7 Edwin Close to the south.

With regard to the general standard of living conditions in the proposed dwelling itself, there is greater concern. The bungalow will be just 4.6 metres in width internally and 7.6 metres in depth with a master bedroom located within the low roofspace with a usable width of only 2.2m (above 1.8m headroom). This results in a total internal floor area of only 43sqm. Although there are no internal floorspace standards for new dwellings, as a guideline and comparison, the Council's DC Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions' states that a 2-bedroom flat should have a minimum floor area of 57 square metres. It is therefore concluded that the proposed two-bedroom property on this plot would provide a poor standard of accommodation with living conditions well below those of the existing bungalows. It would constitute overdevelopment of the site and not achieve high quality development as required by policy DEV1.

In terms of external amenity space, the DC Standard No.2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats' states that a 2-bedroom terraced dwelling should have a minimum rear garden of 50 square metres and a three-bedroom terraced dwelling 65sqm. The proposals would approximately meet these minimum requirements.

***Access and Parking***

The current access to the site is between low walling and tall hedging on the northern side of the front garden and is barely sufficient to accommodate the width of a single car. Within the site there is a hardstanding for one vehicle fronting the dilapidated garage. The applicant has submitted two alternative parking layouts, both involving the removal of the garage, and provision of either 3 or 4 parking spaces within the front garden served by a shared access area. This is an acceptable level of parking provision, the adopted maximum standard being 2 cars per dwelling, but widening of the access is needed. The objector's argument that the new dwelling would cause unacceptable traffic and parking problems is not considered justified. WSCC have no objection subject to securing a contribution of £1,840 (through a section 106 Obligation) to sustainable transport improvements in the area.

**Recommendation**

REFUSE on ground that:-

1. H13AR (amended) [The size of the plot would not permit development of a standard compatible with existing development in the area and in consequence the proposed dwelling would result in an unsatisfactory standard of living accommodation, constituting overdevelopment that would be out of keeping with and detrimental to the environmental character and residential amenities of the locality. It would fail to achieve high quality design and be contrary to the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (CH1, DEV1) and the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2)]

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