

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 11/01921/FULL1

Ward:
West Wickham

Address : 32 Corkscrew Hill West Wickham BR4
9BB

OS Grid Ref: E: 538805 N: 165356

Applicant : Mr James Caldwell

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Sub division of existing plot and erection of detached four bedroom house

Key designations:

Local Distributor Roads

Proposal

It is proposed to subdivide the existing plot and erect a detached four bedroom house. The rear garden would measure just short of 20m in depth and have a maximum width of 10m, tapering to zero to the rear. The house would be (max.) 7.7m high and would be situated approx. 2.7m away from the shared boundary with No.34. On the opposite side the boundary is irregular and tapering and a side space of between 0.8m and 6m (at the front) would be maintained with the shared boundary with the host property at No. 32. The plan originally submitted under the current application has been amended to show the garage abutting the boundary with the host plot deleted from the scheme.

Location

The site is situated on the eastern side of Corkscrew Hill, a primarily residential road which winds down hill from West Wickham towards the junction with Addington Road (A2202). The site is currently occupied by one of pair of interwar semi-detached houses, of chalet design, each with a triangular shaped plot. Together with the adjoining house, the application property occupies a corner position at the junction with between Corkscrew Hill and Courtfield Rise. The pattern of layout is reflected on the opposite side of the corner junction. The houses at either side of the corner pairs are generally semi-detached properties with rectangular shaped plots. Across the road there are semi-detached and detached houses and a local garage.

There is currently a detached double garage at the western side of the application property as well as an older detached single garage close to the eastern boundary with No.34.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby owners /occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received including a letter from the West Wickham Residents Association and a petition signed by 46 local residents.

In all 25 objections were received in relation to the submitted scheme including 3 in relation to the latest revision to the scheme. One letter in support has also been received. The ward Councillor Nicholas Bennett has also raised objections to the proposals despite the revisions the scheme he considers that it remains an overdevelopment lacking in adequate rear amenity space and further that it would have a seriously detrimental affect on the visual and spatial qualities of the area.

The main body of representations from local residents may be summarised as follows:

- the amended plans show that the property would still be very cramped privacy and out look would still be affected, there would be constant noise form cars parking alongside our boundary
- the proposed building foot print has been amended but the height and scale of the building has not
- whilst the removal of the garages in the original application produces a clear gap between neighbouring properties and goes some way to meet the original objections it would still have a seriously detrimental affect on the spatial qualities of the area and the appearance of the location as viewed from Corkscrew Hill
- garden attached to No.32 will become particularly cramped
- rear garden of proposed house remains undersized
- the proposed house if built would not be in keeping with the spatial character of the area and would appear very cramped
- proposal will set an undesirable precedent for future development within the locality
- proposal will put increased pressure on the drainage system
- additional traffic exiting onto Corkscrew Hill would be harmful to highway safety
- the increased traffic movement from an additional property immediately in front of the bus stop will compromise highway safety
- undersized garden
- disproportionate site coverage with buildings
- loss of sunlight privacy and outlook
- increased noise and disturbance in rear garden
- the plot is wide enough to accommodate a new property but would have to be in keeping with the existing chalet style of house.

Any further local representations received will be reported verbally.

Comments from Consultees

Highways – the following comments were made from the highways team in relation to the amended scheme which proposed no garage space. The applicant should be informed that 4 parking spaces are required, 2 for the proposed and two for the donor property; these spaces should be marked out on a plan. Furthermore the applicant should provide a pedestrian link between the new development and the donor property so that parking spaces can be accessed more conveniently.

In view of the above comments a further set of plans was submitted on 13th October 2011. This latest plan showed the 4 parking spaces set out and also the pedestrian link between the proposed house and No.32. Highways have now confirmed that the revised parking layout is satisfactory subject to safeguarding conditions.

Drainage – Comments made on this site in relation to the previous application (10/03515) requests the applicant to provide soakage test results for the proposed soakaway at application stage.

The drainage comments on the current scheme once again request that soakage tests be carried and have suggested that a condition be attached to ensure tests are carried out prior to the commencement of development.

Planning Considerations

The main changes since the previous application (ref. 10/03515) are as follows:

- deletion of both single garages to either side of the proposed house
- deletion of dormer to the northern- eastern flank elevation
- deletion of catslide roof design to both side elevations

An appeal relating to the previous application under planning ref.10/03515 was recently dismissed. With regard to the impact of the proposed house on the Character and appearance of the area the Inspector noted the following:

“...it is difficult to identify a complete pair that remains of that arrangement. Nevertheless, whilst there have been changes to the side roofs, with the addition of a variety of dormers of full height extensions, the gaps largely remain and provide a pleasing rhythm. Within the resulting variety, these gaps are important to the character and appearance of the area, and in the case of corner plots, provide a spacious entry to the road and an appropriate means of turning the corner. Whatever the reason for this, as referred to by the appellant, these are now a prominent feature of the street scene of both Corkscrew Hill and Courtfield Rise.

That is not to say that these gaps need remain fully open and the presence of the large garage on or about the footprint of the proposal shows that built form can be accommodated.”

With regard to character and appearance the Inspector concluded as follows:

“... the existing garages show that a building can be accommodated on the site but that which is proposed would appear uncharacteristically cramped and would seriously erode the spatial qualities of this area as seen from the main road.”

With regard to the impact of the proposal on the ‘living conditions’ of local residents and in particular residents at No. 34 the Inspector concluded as follows:

“Whilst there would be some change, and this neighbour would experience the shortcomings of the scheme at close quarters, these matters would not amount to the degree of change that would cause harm to their living conditions in planning terms”.

There would remain the shortcomings of the cramped arrangement, and that would have an adverse on the outlook of the neighbouring occupier.

Conclusions

The Inspectors decision letter appears to indicate that the principal of redevelopment is acceptable on this site. The shortcomings of the previous scheme were also highlighted and in particular it was noted that “The development would appear cramped against the host building and poorly related to the neighbouring building up the hill, relying on the space that dwelling has to provide openness and that would be insufficient”. The current scheme seeks to address the main area of criticism outlined in the decision letter by introducing gaps to either side of the building where previously single storey garages abutted the boundary.

Technically whilst the sidespaces have been introduced to improve the spaciousness, to the rear part of the building the minimum width of the side space at 0.8m which is less than the 1m required under policy H9, at its widest however the side space splays out to 6m to the front edge of the building where it would be more visible in the street scene.

Despite the changes to the scheme there remains a considerable amount of local opposition to the proposal. Particularly from the neighbours at No. 34 who maintain their stance that the proposed dwelling would be over large for the plot it seeks to accommodate. It is likely that this property would be most affected by the proposal, particularly in terms of loss of outlook. However, the Inspector in considering this aspect with the previous larger scheme did not consider that the impact on residential amenity would be so undue as to warrant a refusal on this basis. It therefore follows that a reduced scheme which takes the building further away would warrant the same conclusion.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 11/01921 and 10/03515, excluding exempt information.

as amended by documents received on 13.10.2011

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION

Subject to the following conditions:

- 1 ACA01 Commencement of development within 3 yrs
ACA01R A01 Reason 3 years
- 2 ACA04 Landscaping Scheme - full app no details
ACA04R Reason A04
- 3 ACA07 Boundary enclosure - no detail submitted
ACA07R Reason A07
- 4 ACC01 Satisfactory materials (ext'nl surfaces)
ACC01R Reason C01
- 5 ACD02 Surface water drainage - no det. submitt
ADD02R Reason D02
- 6 ACH03 Satisfactory parking - full application
ACH03R Reason H03
- 7 ACH22 Bicycle Parking
ACH22R Reason H22
- 8 ACH32 Highway Drainage
ADH32R Reason H32
- 9 ACI02 Rest of "pd" Rights - Class A, B,C and E
Reason: In order to comply with Policies H7 and BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan and to prevent overdevelopment of the site.
- 10 ACI11 Obscure glaz'g/details of opening (1 in) on the first floor
northern elevation
ACI11R Reason I11 (1 insert) BE1
- 11 ACI17 No additional windows (2 inserts) northern and southern
dwelling
ACI17R I17 reason (1 insert) BE1
- 12 ACK01 Compliance with submitted plan
Reason: In order to comply with Policies BE1 and H7 of the Unitary Development Plan and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in the interests of the visual and residential amenities of the area.
- 13 ACK05 Slab levels - no details submitted
ACK05R K05 reason
- 14 No development shall take place until a soakage test has been carried out on the application site, the results of the test shall be submitted to and approved in writing by or on behalf of the Local Planning Authority prior to any development taking place."
Reason: To ensure a satisfactory means of surface water drainage and to accord with Policy ER13 of the Unitary Development Plan.
- 15 AJ02B Justification UNIQUE reason OTHER apps

Policies (UDP)

BE1 Design of New Development
H7 Housing Density and Design
H9 Side Space

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