

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 11/02863/FULL1

Ward:
Copers Cope

Address : 18 Scotts Avenue Shortlands Bromley
BR2 0LQ

OS Grid Ref: E: 538870 N: 169365

Applicant : Ms S Chapman

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Demolition of existing house and the erection of 2 two storey four bedroom detached houses with shared access and car parking to front

Proposal

Planning permission is sought to demolish the existing dwelling at No.18 and replace with 2 two storey four bedroom houses. Both houses would have a shared access from Scotts Avenue and would have a total of 4 car parking spaces at the front. This application has been submitted following the withdrawal of ref. 10/02754 and now proposes a minimum separation of 2.3m between the proposed houses (wall to wall) and 1.15m to the side boundaries. The eaves of the properties would result in an overall separation of 2m between buildings, and 1m to the boundaries. The application site also includes part of the garden area of Three Chestnuts.

Location

The application site includes 18 Scotts Avenue, which is a detached bungalow with accommodation in the roofspace. The site is at the northern side of Scotts Avenue, located towards the western end of the road. The site is located within a residential area, comprising mostly detached two storey family houses on spacious plots. The majority of the houses are large detached Edwardian properties, with some more modest, more recent infill properties, (e.g. Nos. 16 and 16A which were granted planning permission in 1975).

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

- not in keeping with character of Scotts Avenue
- will set precedent for similar developments
- must take into account previous Planning Inspectors decision (ref. 07/00704)

- very similar to application withdrawn in May 2011
- properties are too large
- too close to the road
- too close together
- too close to their neighbours
- cramped-overdevelopment of the site
- detrimental to streetscene
- although minimum H9 side space requirements are met not the standard that is applicable to majority of properties in Scotts Avenue
- impact of drainage due to lowered ground level and the hardstanding to the front of the proposed houses
- development would look like a 'terrace' of housing
- possibility of later seeking to develop Three Chestnuts as well
- removal of front boundary tree screen

Full copy of the letter summarised above can be viewed on file ref. 11/02863. Any further comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Comments from Consultees

Highways- no objections raised (subject to recommended conditions)

Drainage/ Thames Water-No comments raised by the Council's drainage advisor and no objections received from Thames Water

Environmental Health- No objections (subject to suggested informatives)

Planning Considerations

In considering the application the main policies are H1, H7, H9, BE1, T3 and T18 of the Unitary Development Plan. These concern the housing supply and design of new housing/new development, the provision of adequate car parking and new accesses and road safety.

Policy H1 (v) seeks to make most effective use of land. Policy H7 aims to ensure that new residential development respects the existing built and natural environment, is of appropriate density and respects the spatial standards of the area as well as amenities adjacent occupiers, and allows adequate light penetration into and between buildings.

Policy BE1 requires a high standard of design in new development generally, and seeks to protect the amenities of the occupants of neighbouring properties.

Policy T3 seeks to ensure that off street parking provisions for new development are to approved standards. Policy T18 requires that issues of road safety are considered in determining planning applications.

Government guidance in the form of PPS3 "Housing", while emphasises the role of good design and layout to achieve the objectives of making the best use of

previously developed land and improving the quality and attractiveness of residential areas, but without compromising the quality of the environment.

There are also a number of trees on the site that will need to be taken into account whilst assessing the application.

Planning History

The most recent planning history of the site can be summarised as follows:

- 10-02754- application of demolition of No.18 and erection of 2 two storey four bedroom houses was withdrawn
- 07/00704- planning permission refused and dismissed on appeal for the demolition of Three Chestnuts and 18 Scotts Avenue and the erection of 3 two storey houses.
- a previous application for 3 detached houses was withdrawn (ref. 06/04397)
- extensions to No.18 were granted under refs. 04/00724 and 03/03690.

Conclusions

The main issues in this case are whether this type of development is acceptable in principle in this location, the likely impact of the proposed scheme on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and on the amenities of neighbouring residential properties, having particular regard to layout and design of the proposed scheme.

Members may recall that an application to demolish No.18 and Three Chestnuts and to replace with 3 houses. This application was refused under ref. 07/00704 and later dismissed on appeal in March 2008. In the appeal decision the Inspector stated that the application “failed to appreciate and respond to the particular features of Scotts Avenue which contribute most to its distinctive character and appearance.” The Inspector commented that “the prevailing character of Scotts Avenue is of large detached house in generous plots..which are set back from the road often behind well landscaped gardens.” Reference was also made to the substantial physical and visual spaciousness of the area and the visual breaks between the buildings.

The current application now proposes 2 houses but on a smaller plot (the application site no longer proposes to demolish Three Chestnuts). In comparing the current plans to the previously refused application (ref.07/00704) it would appear that the 2 dwellings now proposed would be slightly smaller than previously sought under ref. 07/00704 but would be sited within a much smaller site. However, the surrounding area is largely made up of detached two storey houses on generous plots. It could be argued that the sizes of the proposed plots are out of character with the spatial standards of surrounding development, and as a result the development would appear cramped and overdeveloped. Members may consider that the concerns previously expressed by the Council and by the Planning Inspector would still be relevant in this case, but would also need to take into account the particular element of the current application in the local context of the surrounding area.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on file ref. 11/02863, excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION BE REFUSED

The reasons for refusal are:

- 1 The proposed dwellings would represent a cramped overdevelopment of the site, detrimental to the street scene and out of character with the existing dwellings in the local area, contrary to Policies H7 and BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.

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