

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 12/03600/FULL1

Ward:
Chelsfield And Pratts
Bottom

Address : 70 Sevenoaks Road Orpington BR6 9JY

OS Grid Ref: E: 545831 N: 164988

Applicant : Mr M Hutley

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Demolition of existing garages and erection of two detached 4 bedroom dwellings (at side of 70 and 72 Sevenoaks Road)

Key designations:

Flood Zone 2
Flood Zone 3
London Distributor Roads

Proposal

Permission is sought for the erection of two symmetrical detached 4 bedroom dwellings at either side of the existing pair of semis at Nos. 70 and 72 Sevenoaks Road. These will incorporate accommodation in the roofspace at second floor level, and a total of 4 off-street parking spaces will be provided. An existing detached garage will be demolished to accommodate "Unit One" situated to the south of the site.

Both houses will be of traditional design – based on the existing pair of semis at Nos. 70-72 – and boast a similar footprint (5m (w) x 10m), rising to a maximum height of 7.84m and incorporating front and rear dormers within their roofslopes. These will both be set 2m away from the existing houses at 70-72, and maintain a similar alignment relative to Sevenoaks Road, being set back a maximum 5.3m off that frontage.

The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement and a Flood Risk Assessment.

Location

The site is situated beside the junction of Sevenoaks Road and Stapleton Road. It is broadly rectangular in shape and is bounded on three sides by roads. It is generally level, and the centre of the site is occupied by Nos. 70 and 72

Sevenoaks Road, a pair of semi detached houses of Victoria appearance which has recently been extended and renovated. The land to the south of the site is currently occupied by detached double garage which is proposed to be removed.

The area surrounding the site is primarily residential in character with two and three storey semi-detached and terraced properties and is of no uniform architectural style. The site falls within a Flood Zone.

Comments from Local Residents

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

- overdevelopment
- potential flood risk to future occupiers
- proposed corner dwelling will reduce driver and pedestrian visibility
- road safety concerns
- roundabout installed at the junction of Sevenoaks Road and Stapleton Road has increased highway dangers

Comments from Consultees

No technical Highways objections have been raised, subject to conditions.

No objections have been raised by Environmental Health.

No objections have been raised by the Environment Agency, subject to the imposition of conditions aimed at alleviating potential flood risks.

The Council's Drainage consultant has raised no objection, subject to conditions.

Planning Considerations

Policies BE1, H7, T3 and T18 of the Unitary Development Plan apply to the development and should be given due consideration. These policies seek to ensure a satisfactory standard of design which complements the qualities of the surrounding area, and which does not adversely affect neighbouring amenity; to ensure the provision of adequate parking; and to ensure that new development does not adversely affect road safety.

No objections have been raised by the Tree Officer.

Planning History

Under ref. 11/00020, planning permission was granted for a single storey rear extension to the existing pair of semis at Nos. 70 and 72 Sevenoaks Road.

Under ref. 11/03292, planning permission was refused for the erection of a two storey detached dwelling to the south of the existing pair of semis.

Under ref. 11/01703, planning permission was refused for erection of two detached 4 bedroom dwellings either side of the existing pair of semis at Nos. 70 and 72. This was on the following grounds:

The proposal constitutes a cramped overdevelopment of the site and would result in a retrograde lowering of the spatial standards to which the area is at present developed.

By reason of the limited individual plot frontages, the proposed dwelling 'Unit Two' would result in a cramped and overdominant development of the site out of character with adjoining development, seriously detrimental to the appearance of the street scene in general.

The proposed dwelling 'Unit One' would, by reason of its considerable rearward projection, have a detrimental effect on the daylighting and prospect to the adjoining house at No. 72.

That decision was contested at appeal. The Planning Inspector commented, in respect of the proposed house to the northern side of the plot ("Unit Two"), at Paragraph 10, that:

"The building would create an unduly dominant feature in the street scene, which would intrude significantly into the open area around the junction with Sevenoaks Road and erode the overall spacious character of the area. Furthermore, it would not reflect the pattern of development on the opposite side of Stapleton Road at this point, where the house at No 2 is stepped back to reflect the radius curve of the road junction."

The Inspector added, in the following paragraph that:

"The appellant has argued that Unit Two would align with the front building line of No 1 Stapleton Road, but this house is further into the estate and set back approximately 4 metres from the road. It has been suggested that the principal elevation of Unit Two would be that facing Sevenoaks Road and the siting of its side elevation close to Stapleton Road would be comparable to other development locally. However, it is evident that the Stapleton Road elevation has been designed as the principal elevation..."

However, in respect of "Unit One" the Inspector considered that this "would sit comfortably in an acceptably-sized plot between the side of No 72 Sevenoaks Road and the adjacent end of terrace property, No 4 Healy Drive. As such, it would not appear unduly cramped, prominent or out of character with the area."

Subsequently, under ref. 11/03997, planning permission was granted for a two storey detached dwelling (with accommodation in roofspace and associated landscaping and car parking) to the south of the existing pair of semis.

Conclusions

The main issues relating to the application are the effect that it would have on the character of the area and the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties.

As Members will note planning permission has previously been granted for a dwelling to the south of the existing pair of semis (at "Unit One") under ref 11/03997. Accordingly, the main consideration here relates to the proposed dwelling at "Unit Two" which is situated beside the junction of Sevenoaks Road and Stapleton Road.

In contrast to the proposal refused and subsequently dismissed at appeal under ref. 11/01703, various changes have been introduced, including the following:

- the minimum separation between the proposed dwelling at "Unit Two" and the adjacent highways at Sevenoaks Road and Stapleton Road has been increased to 4.0m (up from 2.3m);
- the overall width of the dwelling has been reduced to approximately 5m (down from 6.25m), and there has been a corresponding reduction in respect of the "Unit One" dwelling aimed at achieving a uniformity between the two properties
- front and rear roof dormers are proposed in lieu of side dormers; and
- the entrances to both houses now front Sevenoaks Road

Whilst the above changes have in large part been introduced in order to achieve a less dominant and cramped development within this corner plot, concerns remain as to the overall impact of the proposed dwelling at Unit Two in terms of local character and spatial standards.

The area to the north of the existing pair of semis at Nos. 70-72, whilst currently vacant, contributes to the suburban and open character of the area, particularly in view of its prominent corner location. It is considered that the provision of the proposed two storey dwelling within this area will undermine this existing character, since this will appear cramped and dominant within the wider streetscene. The building would create an unduly dominant feature in the streetscene, which will intrude significantly into the open area around the junction with Sevenoaks Road and erode the overall spacious character of the area. On this basis the proposal is considered unacceptable.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on files refs. 11/01703, 11/03292, 11/03997 and 12/03600, excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: PERMISSION BE REFUSED

The reasons for refusal are:

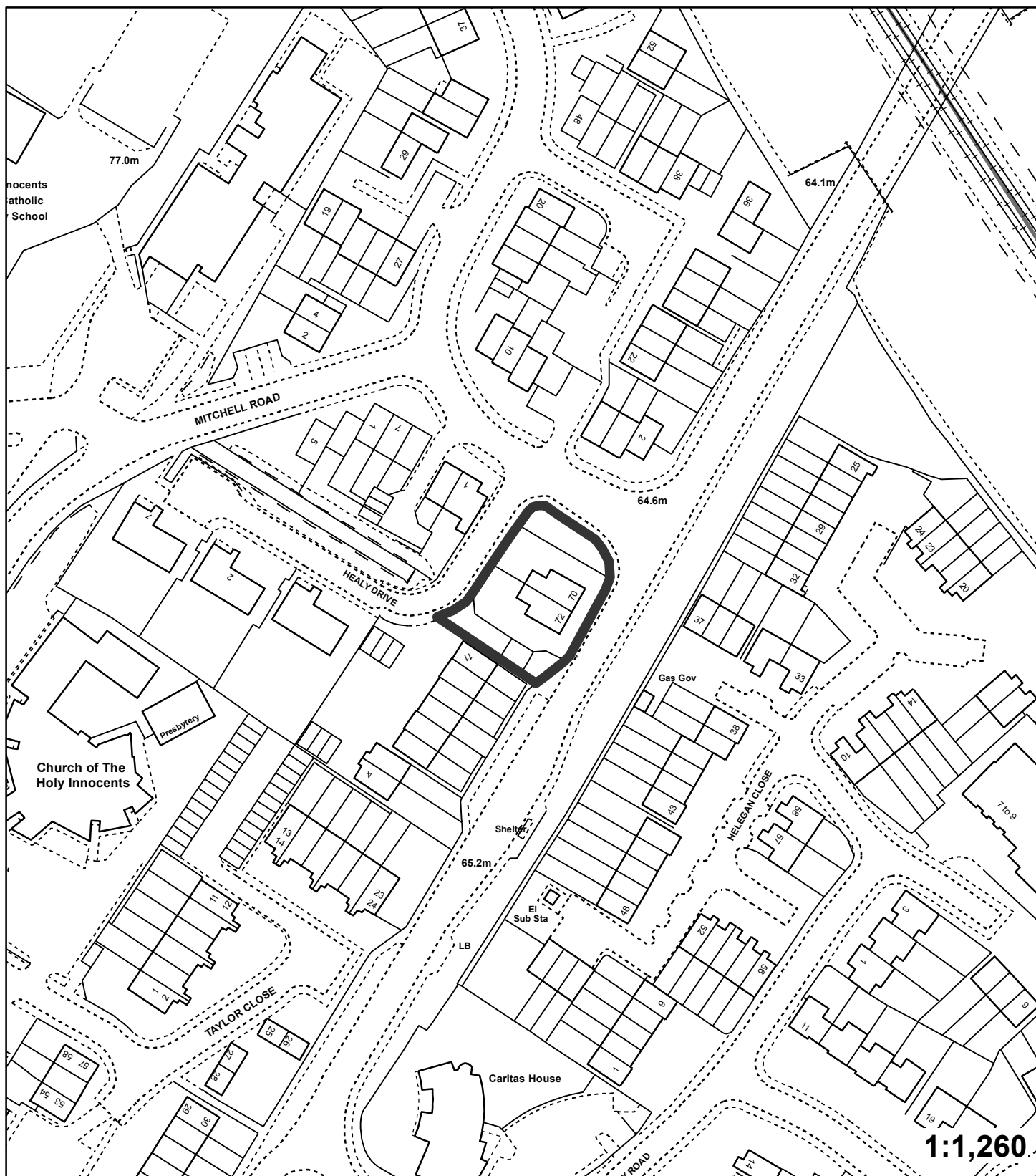
- 1 The proposal constitutes a cramped overdevelopment of the site and would result in a retrograde lowering of the spatial standards to which the area is at present developed, contrary to Policies BE1 and H7 of the Unitary Development Plan.

- 2 By reason of the limited individual plot frontages, the proposed dwelling 'Unit Two' would result in a cramped and overdominant development of the site out of character with adjoining development, seriously detrimental to the appearance of the street scene in general and contrary to Policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.

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"This plan is provided to identify the location of the site and should not be used to identify the extent of the application site"

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