

Comments of Cllr Douglas Auld to Plans Sub-Committee 1
On 10th September 2015, Concerning 9, Station Square,
BR5 1LY Application No. 15/01485/FULL3

Madam Chairman

Station Square itself is at the centre of the Station Square, Petts Wood Conservation Area.

Members will have noted the content of the proposal to this application shown towards the bottom of page 23, and on page 27 the planning officer's recommendation that the application be refused on the ground of :-

'The proposals would result in an unacceptable level of overlooking of neighbouring residential properties in Petts Wood Road from rear windows and balconies within the rear extension, which would be seriously detrimental to the amenities of these residents and contrary to policy BE1 of the Unitary Development Plan.

Subsequent to that recommendation I believe all members of the committee have received a letter with attachments from the applicant explaining the steps taken to overcome the ground for objection. The applicant then asks consideration be given to approving the application.

If that had been the only ground for objection then I believe there would have been two possible options. 1. Refuse the application or 2. Defer a decision, as to date the committee have not had the benefit of the further considerations of the planning officer following the receipt of the applicants letter.

However I believe there are other grounds for refusal. The report states that no parking is proposed for the development but adds rather loosely that there would appear to be space for 2 or 3 vehicles at the rear of the extension accessed from the rear service road. The Highways Engineer's officer re-iterates that and adds rather lamely that it would be preferable for some parking to be made available. That officer in agreeing with the submitted survey adds that it is indicated that the majority of the on-street parking demand during the day is likely to be non-residential, and that nearby roads (Petts Wood Road and West Way) have free parking.

I have been a Ward councillor in the Ward for nine years and have an excellent local knowledge of local parking demands and difficulties.

On that basis I disagree with the comments made by the Highways Engineer's officer. For the last five/six years the local councillors, council officers, shop keepers and residents have worked together to achieve a balance regarding parking taking into account the needs of residents, shop keepers and commuters. This has involved at least two public surveys and a great number of fine tuning amendments to the final scheme. If parking was difficult before it became stretched to the limit with the opening of a branch of Sainsbury's and a number of quality restaurants in Station Square in the last two or three years. Without parking being available these businesses and the surrounding shops would not thrive. There is a constant and increasing demand for more and more parking space.

Most of Station Square is metered and heavily parked. Turning right out of the service road at the rear of 9, Station Square, Petts Wood Road is single and double yellow lined for a minimum of 500 hundred yards. The exception to this is the provision of fourteen free parking bays in Petts Wood Road fairly near Station Square. However these are for a maximum of two hours with no return and are intended to encourage a turnover of shop customers. West Way which was also mentioned is fully parked day and night..

When it is cold wet and windy who would want to park 500yards away and walk home when it may be possible to park next to home not withstanding this would cause more obstruction..

It is suggested that there may be space for 2 or 3 vehicles off the service road to the rear of the extension at 9, Station Road. I know this service road particularly well having dealt with a few matters relating to it in the last three years. Some days it is possible to drive nearly the whole length of it but on other days it is impossible. I would emphasize it is a service road serving restaurants and shops on that side of Station Square. To suggest there would be additional parking available at this location is a myth.

Moving on to my final point. As stated above the application site is in a Conservation Area. It is to convert one flat into two and to build two additional flats in a new extension to the rear. Thus it is proposed, without going upwards to build the maximum possible number of flats, four, in a very tight and restricted area. The proposed flat 1, at 54sq.m is 11% less than the minimum size suggested by the London Plan. The proposal states the communal amenity space would be located on the flat roof between the main building and the extension. The dimensions are

not given and from the orientation of the two buildings mentioned the amenity space would only receive minimum sun and natural light for a brief period each day.

While I believe it would be possible to have a maximum of two flats at this location the current application would result in an over development of the site and would result in a cramped appearance.

I propose that the application be refused for the following reasons :-

Lack of Parking
Over development of the site
Overlooking and Loss of Privacy

Policy T3
Policy BE1
Policy BE1

Thank you Madam Chairman



Douglas Auld
Cllr. Petts Wood & Knoll Ward