

**ITEM 4.11 - 38 PRIORY AVENUE, PETTS WOOD, KENT BR5 1JF  
REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY WARD MEMBER, COUNCILLOR SIMON  
FAWTHROP, AT THE MEETING**

The issue with this application is the impact upon the appearance of the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character (ASRC).

As ward Councillors, and I speak for both Cllrs Onslow and Owen as well, we recognise that buildings designed and built in the 1930s will need updating and refreshing to be commensurate with modern day living. However when looking at development it has to be taken in the context that Petts Wood is one of only two outstanding garden suburbs in the whole of Greater London, the other being its more famous counterpart of Hampstead Garden Suburb.

When drawing up the description of the ASRC Councillors and local residents struck a balance between preserving the appearance and character of the area, but allowing appropriate development. Unfortunately in recent times some residents took advantage of the gaps within the planning regulations to make inappropriate additions through Permitted Development Rights within the area. To prevent this degradation of the area, some PD Rights have been removed across the area, namely those with regard to the front roof line and with regard to the frontages. This was to ensure that reasonable development could be undertaken at the rear of the property without impacting the appearance and character of the ASRC. In that regard, whilst there are some minor considerations around matching materials, the rear dormer is not opposed.

The rationale behind the removal of PD Rights was to ensure that the appearance of the ASRC remains intact. The description of Petts Wood ASRC lays great store in the rhythm of the street scene and the symmetry between pairs of semi-detached properties.

It is therefore disappointing that the report falls short as it does not even consider the impact of the proposals on the ASRC as a consideration, nor does it deal with the context and history of the area, which is laid out in the ASRC description circulated to members, by Cllr Onslow.

Under the Design section, the report on page 147 recognises that the pair of semis will be unbalanced if this proposal goes ahead and further recognises that there will be harm to the ASRC. Again there is a recognition that the ASRC will suffer from the front roof lights as mentioned on page 148. The degree of harm is of course a subjective matter, with the transient report writer not understanding the context and history of the area in respect of the degree of harm. Councillors using local knowledge understand the history and context of the Petts Wood ASRC garden suburb, which has been established over decades.

In this case the impact is quite substantial when viewed from the front, as the unbalancing effect will be detrimental to the rhythm of the street scene, particularly the front roof lights. The proposed plans add a bulk to no. 38 and to the pair of

properties leaving them out of kilter within the street scene. This is contrary to policies BE1, H10 and H8, and also policy 44 of the emerging plan (which on this specific policy the inspector has not raised any issues).

Whilst it is recognised that PD was granted in 2017, such permissions no longer automatically flow, as can be seen from the harm done to the ASRC in a short period of time. The other element that needs to be considered is the context of the proposed loft conversion generally within the ASRC. Even if the committee were to find that there is little or no harm from an individual application, taken in the context that if one application is granted all applications must be granted, the cumulative impact of even one misplaced application would in its-self create a harm to the ASRC, the ARSC would be destroyed by the death of a thousand cuts, removing from Greater London one of its two premier Garden Suburb developments. I therefore propose that the application be refused on the grounds stated.