



The Queen's Hall
High Street
Cuckfield
West Sussex
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Planning Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held at 7.30pm on Thursday 16th February 2023

Present: Mr S Oversby-Powell (Chairman), Mr A Burton, Mr P Ceccherini, Mrs A King, Mr M Sheldon and Mrs J White

In Attendance: Mrs S Heynes (Parish Clerk) and Mrs N Ripert (Communications & Admin Officer)

Public Question Time:
None

PL124 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr Podmore offered his apologies which were noted.

PL125 To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda. (The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If you become aware, during the meeting, of an interest that has not been disclosed under this item you must immediately disclose it)

None.

PL126 To approve the minutes of the committee meeting held on 26th January 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2023 were noted and approved.

PL127 To note the Planning Action List

Noted.

PL128 To consider the following Planning Applications:

a) AP/23/0010: Courtyard House Whitemans Green (DM/22/2117)

Proposed single storey carers annex extension to the North of existing house.

Comment: The Parish Council would like to object to this appeal as we believe that our objections to the previous applications are still relevant (and that the previous refusals were correct). We also feel that the planning history of this property is relevant in the context of this application particularly in relation to the character of the street scene.

The applicant has in this instance invoked the services of planning consultants (Lewis & Co) and they have submitted a 20 page Appeal Statement. The document states why they think planning permission should be granted, whilst also bizarrely extolling the architectural heritage of Mr King, it is unclear to us what relevance this is to this application. However, since the applicant has kindly provided the document it's only fair that we examine some of the detail.

Looking solely at the document:

Introduction

Cuckfield Parish Council confirmed their eligibility to hold the General Power of Competence on 4th May 2021, all decisions made during this meeting are done so using this power.

1.3 “Carer’s accommodation is required to enable Mr & Mrs King to continue to live in their home in their advancing years.”

This despite the original bungalow’s design statement saying:

a. “...overall floor area has been determined by the need for good space standards to facilitate wheelchair use and carer accommodation if ever needed”

b. “The dwelling is planned so that current needs for a computer room/office for two people can, in the future operate as an overnight carer’s room”.

As the initial bungalow was clearly designed by the applicant to include their future carer requirements, why has this new extension been positioned as carer’s accommodation?

1.6 would retain a comfortable separation gap with the neighbouring property (1 Woodcroft Villas).

Please refer to point 3.3. below.

Appeal Site & Planning History

2.4 Planted 9 new trees around the property (Ironwood & Japanese Maple) which have since matured and now make a positive contribution to the overall appearance of the site. We are yet to become aware of these ‘mature trees. As can be seen from the photos there are ‘medium sized pot’ shrubs either side of the main entrance and the top of a tree poking above the right hand side of the main entrance wall, the only matured tree visible from the highway is the Cordelyne in the front garden of the property along with a relatively small Cherry sapling.

The site has never been re-vegetated to the level that was stated in the original bungalow design statement. Indeed the approach of the applicant in respect of this aspect of the design might be described as ‘limited’.

We are of this opinion that this development does not improve the street scene, the site, seen from the air can be viewed as a classic Garden Grab, perhaps best conveyed by the images attached in the appendix.

2.8 The bungalow would be mainly set back from the frontage and, being single storey, would only be glimpsed from London Road, where the retained trees would still be an important feature.

There are no retained trees (as can be seen above) and the complete street scene for the existing bungalow seen from London Road is brick... (as can also be seen in the photos, the property in its current form as already demonstrably impacted the character of this part of the village).

Proposed Development

3.3 The side of the extension would be set back by 3 metres from the northern boundary.

In the applicant’s original plans for the bungalow (and the subsequent application for an extension in 2015), the distance between the North facing brick wall of the bungalow and the brick wall of 1 Woodcroft Villas (the border with the property at 2

Manor Drive) was stated to be approx. 12 metres and this distance varies in the scaled drawings of this latest application as follows:

Drawing 22/1: 12.7m
Drawing 22/2: 12m
Drawing 22/5: 13m
Drawing 22/6: 12.6m

The actual measured distance along this rear boundary with 2 Manor Drive is only 11.04 metres.

Using the most detailed scaled drawing of the proposed extension, Drawing 22/1, the total width of the new extension from the existing North facing wall of Courtyard House would appear to be 10 metres.

Therefore, the statement in the applicant's Appeal Statement of a 3 metre gap cannot be possible – this gap has been reduced to only 1.04m.

The drawings also give an inaccurate picture of how the proposed extension will sit on the site especially with relation to the proximity to 1 Woodcroft Villas.

It also asks the question as to whether the original bungalow was built accurately to the plan or whether some form of 'expansion' took place during the building process? I have also brought this point to the attention of Lesley Westphal at MSDC and she has said that she will ask the Planning Inspector to attend the site and to cross reference the plans with the dimensions of the site.

Case for the Appellant

5.2 The proposed extension would be set back to the rear of the appeal site and away from the northern boundary.

Please refer to the response to point 3.3 above.

5.5 However, there is an absence of a strong building line along either side of London Road

Although the next three dwellings, 1 & 2 Woodcroft Villas and The White House, are on a consistent building line.

5.6 The side of the extension would be set back by 3 metres from the northern boundary (a comparable separation gap to many neighbouring houses in the Conservation Area).

Again, please refer to the response to point 3.3 above where, I believe the gap would be just over 1 metre not 3 metres.

Conclusions

6.2 Carer's accommodation is required...

Please refer to the response to point 1.3 above. Plus, the siting of velux windows on the existing bungalow that weren't on the original plans may indicate additional habitable space on an upper level that could be used for carer's facilities?

6.5 ...would retain a comfortable separation gap with the neighbouring property (1 Woodcroft Villas).

Again, please refer to the response to point 3.3 above where, I believe the gap would be just over 1 metre jot 3 metres.

Our original objection was:

Application Summary Reference: DM/22/2117

Comments: Object. The committee discussed the reasonable usage of the proposed application and resolved to reinforce the previous objections raised. In summary, this would cause significant impact to the street scene opposite a Grade 2 listed building adjacent to the conservation area.

The following policies were deemed relevant when considering this application.

CNP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation a) Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character and reflects the identity of the local context of Cuckfield as defined on Map 3 – Conservation Areas and Character Areas, by way of; 1. Height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design, and materials of buildings, 2. The scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape); and b) Is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset and; c) Follows guidance in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and d) Respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site, and f) Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution, and g) Makes best use of the site to accommodate development.

CNP 10 – Building Extensions within and outside the Built Up Area Boundary a) The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building and the character of the street scene; b) Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene; e) The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible, reinforced and; f) The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.

Additionally, the reasons for refusal of the previous attempt to develop this property in application DM/15/0123 were still valid.

b) DM/23/0164: Kings House 8 Church Street

x1 Cypress Tree - remove.

Comment: No objection

c) DM/23/0003: Land Between Copyhold Rise And Fair Close Copyhold Lane

Variation of condition 2 of Appeal ref AP/20/0035 (planning application DM/19/4559) - Amendments to scheme.

Comment: No comment

d) DM/22/3494: 6 Burrell Cottages Whitemans Green

Proposed first floor rear extension and internal modification work.

Comment: No objection - the committee resolved to defer to the conservation officer's comments in respect of the materials used.

e) DM/23/0184: The Dell

Proposed single storey rear extension.

Comment: No objection

f) DM/23/0047: 3 The Brambles

Proposed loft conversion with raised ridge and rear dormer.

Comment: No objection

20:18 Cllr Symonds joined the meeting

g) DM/23/0324: 2 Longacre Cottages Ardingly Road

Proposed part two-storey side extension.

Comment: No objection

h) DM/23/0317: Laurel House 21 Manor Drive

The proposed works include, removal of a single storey extension. Removal of a conservatory and replacement with a two storey extension on similar footprint to conservatory. Garage conversion into habitable space. Small single storey extension to side for porch into garage conversion. Small single storey extension to front to line through with existing front facade. Existing first floor window moved across facade.

Comment: Object – the committee did not have any objection to the actual application but resolved to object to the proposed cladding materials for the external walls as per application DM/22/1292. The materials proposed were incompatible with the existing building and contravened CNP10D of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

i) DM/22/3325: Riseholme Tylers Green

Proposed amendments to two existing access points across an existing dwelling and new build currently under construction. (Updated plans received 12.12.2022. Tree information received 12.12.2022 and 06.02.2023)

Comment: No objection

PL129 To receive an update regarding the Public Open Space and Landscape Plans at the Bylanes/Buttinghill Drive development

No update.

PL130 To receive an update regarding the proposed 'Cuck-Stye' development to the south of Cuckfield

No update provided.

PL131 To note any planning and/or appeal decisions received from Mid Sussex District Council

a) DM/22/3345: Land To The Rear Of 1 Waterhouse Square Ashburnham Drive

T1: Lime Situated behind fence line, cut back house side by 3metres. T2: Lime Situated behind fence line, cut back by 3 metres. T3: Sycamore fell to ground level.

CPC: No objection

MSDC: Permission granted

b) DM/22/3543: Mercers High Street

T1 Cherry tree - fell. T2 Beech tree - crown thin by up to 25%.

CPC: No objection

MSDC: Permission granted

c) DM/22/3848: 4 Brock End

Single storey Oak framed garden room extension to rear following demolition of existing conservatory.

CPC: No objection, however clarification was requested regarding the suggestion of windows in the roof; on one image it indicates Velux windows would be installed, on other images there were no windows.

MSDC: Permission granted

d) DM/23/0116: Court Meadow School Hanlye Lane

Discharge of condition 4 relating to planning reference DM/21/3755.

CPC: No objection

MSDC: Permission granted

PL132 To consider whether to complete a review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The committee agreed to defer this matter for consideration by the new Council after their election in May.

PL133 To consider the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation and whether to respond on behalf of Cuckfield Parish Council.

No comments were added, however the Clerk had received a proposed response from West Sussex Association of Local Councils which could have Cuckfield Parish Council's name added to it.

PL134 To consider impacts on Neighbourhood Plan monitoring indicators and targets from MSDC decisions, and to update CPC monitoring data

None.

PL135 To note items arising after the preparation of this agenda which the Chairman agrees to take as urgent. Such matters will be for noting only or deferral to a future meeting only

None.

Meeting Closed at 8:44pm

Signed _____

Next Planning Meeting: 9th March 2023

Appendix

Street scene below (2005 on the left, 2022 on the right).



Mature trees (Photo below March 2001) – more recent photos will confirm much the same.



Photo below (2010) prior to construction of Courtyard House.



And from the other side (2021 first picture below and 2010 second picture below).

