

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF

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From: James Howard
Sent: 04 April 2022 15:17
To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning Objection

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Objection to Planning Application BN16/22/PL – rear of Clare Court, 67 Barnham Road, Eastergate

Myself (James Howard) and my wife (Ngozi Howard) who live at 65 Barnham Road, wish to communicate our objection to the above application for the following reasons;

1. Area of Special Character

Barnham Road has long been designated as an “*Area of Special Character*”. This is understood to mean an area which is of distinctive character or quality, and therefore worthy of protection through rigorous control of new development. The proposed development flies directly in the face of this, and if permitted will be a major step towards ensuring that the area’s recognised character is permanently destroyed. The houses on the west side of Barnham Road are characteristically mature, attractively proportioned, appropriately distanced, set in large gardens in semi-rural style, and with a good measure of privacy. Our house, built in the early 1980s, was a tasteful addition, deliberately designed in such a way as not to overlook neighbouring properties and built at considerable cost with the purpose not only of blending with the existing environment but also enhancing it. A large scale building development in next door’s back garden, such as is proposed, would destroy all of that rather than protect it.

In Section 6.3.1. of the Planning Statement it is claimed that the proposed new houses would not be visible from Barnham Road. This is not correct; the submitted Street Scene diagram clearly shows that a significant portion of the development will be visible from the main road now that the applicant has removed the 400 year old yew tree from the front garden in pursuance of their desire to build.

It is further claimed in section 6.3.1 that the development “would reflect the character and appearance of the surrounding area”. Crucially, for those living in the neighbouring properties, it would do precisely the opposite.

In Section 6.3.2 it is claimed that “the impact on the street scene and Area of Special Character will be minimal”. The author of the Planning Statement appears to have been encouraged to make this extraordinary claim by the section of the Pre-Application Advice headed “Area of Special Character” which states that as the properties are “not visible from the wider area”, the proposed dwellings are “not considered to impact the designation” of Area of Special Character. Thus the question of whether the development is compatible with the Area of Special Character seems now to turn upon how it appears to passers-by. The interests of those who actually live in this Area of Special Character are completely ignored!

2. Overlooking

Both the Pre-Application Advice and the Planning Statement refer to the development at No 97 Barnham Road in support of this proposed development. To use No 97 as a precedent is inappropriate; you are not comparing like with like. In particular:

i) Section 6.4.1 of the Planning Statement says that there would be a distance of at least **24 metres** between the front elevations of the new dwellings and the rear elevations of neighbouring properties, and claims that this distance would avoid any adverse effects in terms of overlooking, overbearing and overshadowing. The authors of the Planning Statement have been careful not to give comparative distances, as to do so would invalidate their contention. So here are the figures: at No 97 Barnham Road, the distance between the rear elevations of the former Rectory and the front elevations of the nearest new house is **60 metres** which is *two and a half times the distance*. Thus there is obviously much less of an issue with overlooking at that development.

ii) The development at No 97 was formed by combining far-end portions of no less than three properties, to create a sensitively designed and appropriately distanced scheme of three new detached houses. What is proposed for the rear of Clare Court is a row of four semis halfway up a single rear garden and placed very much closer to existing dwellings.

In Section 6.4.1. of the Planning Statement, it is claimed that the distances involved would not have any adverse effects in terms of overlooking. This is simply untrue. We would be heavily overlooked by the new properties in the following ways:

- the amenity and privacy of our patio, garden and summer house that we currently enjoy would be destroyed;
- even the lower windows of the new dwellings would present a close and direct view into our rooms

The prospect of having a row of houses built so close to us in our neighbours' back garden, with the associated loss of privacy and quiet enjoyment of our house and garden, is horrendous. No one from the Planning Department visited us when formulating the Pre-Application Advice to see how it would look from our point of view. We cordially invite them to do so.

3. Overbearing

The nature of any building being "overbearing" is that it forms a dominating and disproportionate entity in relation to surrounding properties. And that is exactly what the proposed new houses will do to us. In common with all adjacent properties, what we currently see when we look from the rear of our house is a garden with open spaces over the gardens either side. What we will see instead if this development goes ahead is a row of two-storey buildings immediately adjacent to our garden, dominating our view to the right and closing us in.

4. Overshadowing

Because the proposed buildings would be placed just the other side of the boundary between our house and the Clare Court garden, they will in winter cast a shadow over a significant portion of our rear garden. Again, this fact is contrary to the claim in 6.4.1 of the Planning Statement that there would be no adverse effect in terms of overshadowing.

Regards,
James Howard
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Sent from my iPhone