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In relation to: Flat 8 Clare Court
67 Barnham Road
Barnham
PO22 0EP

31st March 2022

Arun District Council (Planning Department)
Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
LITTLEHAMPTON
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

For the attention of Case Officer Amber Willard

Dear Madam

Re: Application no BN/16/22/PL - Erection of 4 no. dwellings with associated car parking on land to rear of Clare Court, 67 Barnham Road, Barnham PO22 0EP

I write to you to register my strongest objection to the above planning application on behalf of my elderly parents who live in Clare Court on Barnham Road, Barnham. They have been reminded by the Managing Agents, on the instigation of the freeholder, that there is a clause in their lease that forbids them from objecting, in person, to any Planning Application made by the Landlord.

I catalogue below my comments on the Planning Statement in support of my objections.

Application Site

2.1.2 States that the site is mainly grassland, but until mid 2020 it was surrounded by mature trees, including a fine Walnut Tree, a Willow Tree and many others of good arboriculture value. All these trees have been felled in advance of the planning application and the Tree Survey listed in Appendix 1. It also states that the site is not used and maintained by the applicant, this again is not the case. Until July 2021 it was used regularly by the leaseholders and maintained by them.

The Wider Area

2.2.1 There is no continuous pavement on the west side of Barnham Road (the side of the proposed site) between Elm Grove South and Gospond Road. Therefore, to reach the amenities of Barnham centre from the site would necessitate the crossing of this very busy road. Not such a highly sustainable location as the applicant claims.

Planning History

- 3.1.1 Recent is a relative word, there have, as you will be aware, been previous applications, the latest being (EG/97/05) dated July 2005, which was refused on appeal (ref APP/C3810/A/06/2014596). That application was for a single bungalow, whereas this proposal is for two pairs of semi-detached houses and is much more intrusive.

Pre-Application Enquiry

In this section, which appears to be actively supported by the Planning Department, there are several areas that need to be challenged.

- 3.2.3 The development at 97 Barnham Road is not similar, as suggested by the Planning Statement. The site area there is almost double the size of that at Clare Court, 0.34 hectares at No 97, as opposed to 0.18 at Clare Court. The distance between the front elevations of the new dwellings and rear elevation of neighbouring properties is more than double, 52 metres at No 97 as opposed to 24 metres at Clare Court. To say that the distances at Clare Court would not have any effects in terms of overlooking and overshadowing is not true.

The statement that the proposal would not impact on the **Area of Special Character** simply does not stand up. Such an area is said to be one which is of distinctive character and should be protected through control of a new development. The proposed development would serve to destroy this, rather than protect it and will be clearly visible from Barnham Road, especially so, when further shrubs and small trees are removed to accommodate the access road.

It is alleged that the noise generated by an intensification of vehicle movements on the access road would not be significant, this has to be very questionable. This road would pass within half a metre of the side face of Flat 5. It is reasonable to suggest that there will be at least 20 extra vehicle movements per day generated by the new dwellings, plus deliveries and also the arrival and manoeuvring of the Refuse Collection Vehicle, which will create much more disturbing noise for the present occupants of Clare Court.

The relocation of the communal bin storage nearer to and adjacent to the highway would involve the clearing of more trees/bushes (some of which have already been cut down in preparation for the application) and would have an unsightly effect on the continuous greenery of the west side of Barnham Road.

4. Proposed Development

- 4.2 The proposal states that there will be a distance of 27 metres between the front of the new dwellings and the nearest rear elevation of Clare Court. This may be true, but when one adds on the length of their front gardens (see 4.4) this brings their plot to within 13 metres of the rear gardens of Clare Court.
- 4.6 Plot 1 second parking space will be immediately adjacent to the garden fence of Clare Court. This creates the possibility of blocking out light/views from Flat 5 depending on the vehicle type that could be parked there (i.e. Camper Vans, Commercial Vans, etc). A similar scenario exists with the proposed visitor parking and Flat 1.

5. Planning Policy

5.3 Development Plan (Arun District Local Plan 2011-2031)

- 5.3.26 Policy ES10 requires new developments to retain ancient trees or trees/hedgerows of good arboriculture value, however the applicant has cynically and systematically already cut down many trees on the proposed site in advance of submitting the planning application.

6. Planning Appraisal

6.3 Design, Form and Appearance

- 6.3.2 As previously stated the proposed dwellings would be visible from Barnham Road and from every rear garden of the properties on the west side of Barnham Road, between Gospond Road and Elm Grove South.

- 6.3.5 The site already had generous planting areas for biodiversity gain, but this again has been destroyed prior to the application.

6.4 Residential Amenity

- 6.4.2 A new hedge planted along the northern boundary will do nothing to absorb noise from residents' cars, when Clare Court, most affected, lies on the eastern boundary of the site.

- 6.4.3 States disturbance during the construction phase will be kept to a minimum. This is nonsense, when the extent of the building site will be at most 6 metres from the rear elevation of Clare Court. There will be heavy plant and construction vehicles working on site for many months. Considering the overall size of the site (0.18 hectares) there will be times when there will be insufficient space for such heavy vehicles and as a result, they will be parked on Barnham Road causing major traffic problems. The residents of the rear flats of Clare Court will also suffer physical pollution from airborne dust and grit, not to mention visual pollution for months.

6.5 Ecology

- 6.5.1 States there is some limited potential for stag beetles and other reptiles. I personally have seen evidence of colonies of stag beetles, protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
There was also a pond on site, which encouraged even more diverse creatures. This again has been destroyed and filled in by the landlord. The proposed development would destroy the existing ecology of the area.

6.6 Arboriculture

- 6.6.1 States that there are no protected trees on site, that is not true. There are two protected Oak trees on site. It also states that there are no trees requiring removal. That is true, because virtually all have already been felled by the applicant in preparation for the application. I attach for your reference photographs of the site before and after the tree felling.

All this against the background of your own Leader of the Council, Shaun Gunnar, appearing on social media lauding the fact that 33,000 trees were to be planted in Arun to assist against Climate Change.

6.9 Transport and Highways

- 6.9.3 Whilst two parking spaces per new dwelling and two more for visitors are proposed, largely consistent with the council's SPG on Parking Standards, the proposed development would reduce the existing parking spaces for Clare Court, which with eight dwellings would be well below these standards. This could potentially involve visitors to Clare Court and indeed residents having to park on Barnham Road, which at present has no visible restrictions. Clearly undesirable on such an increasingly busy highway.
- 6.9.5 In spite of the figures quoted, visibility is not easy southwards and as stated the northern splay is hampered by vegetation on land not within the applicant's ownership. Whilst no accidents have been recorded in the past five years, traffic has been generated by the occupants of Clare Court only. With the potential 20+ more movements from the proposed new dwellings, plus delivery vehicles and refuse collection vehicles, there would be greater risk in future. It should also be noted that there has been an increasing volume of traffic on Barnham Road due to the many housing developments in the area and this will only worsen as such developments increase.
- 6.9.6 The incorporation of a turning area for any vehicle, large or small, will further impact on the tranquillity of the residents of Clare Court.

Access to the Communal Garden at Clare Court

At present, access to the Communal Garden for residents of flats on floors 1 & 2 is only by means of exiting the front entrance and walking to the rear via the north side of the building and entering via two small gates in the fence. Under the proposal this same north side will become the access road, thus rendering the access to the said garden extremely dangerous. No footpaths on either side of the access roadway are shown on the development plans.

Proximity to St Philip Howard School

The proposed new dwellings and associated gardens will be positioned right up to the fence of the school. The rear windows of the houses will overlook the grounds of the school, in an area where the children take games and physical recreation from less than 13 metres. In fact, the overlooking from the rear gardens is even less, a matter of feet. As a parent of a two school age daughters, if she were to be at this school, I would be appalled if this development were to be approved, allowing this situation to arise.

Security of Clare Court

At present Clare Court is reasonably secure. The rear aspect, not overlooked, is protected by a locked 6-foot fence prohibiting any passer by reaching this quiet area. If the proposed development were to proceed there would be no protection or privacy at all to the rear, open to all via the access road. This is an area of grave concern, especially to the occupiers of the ground floor flats.

Area of Special Character

Barnham Road has, for many years, been designated as an 'Area of Special Character' and I would remind you that one of the reasons for the refusal of the last development (EG/97/05) was **the detrimental effect it would have had on this area of special quality**. The second reason was, and I quote '**The proposal would constitute an unsatisfactory form of backland development out of character with the area, together with the incidental use of the proposed means of access, would be un-neighbourly and adversely affect the privacy and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties**'. This in conflict with various policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan and the Arun District Local Plan.

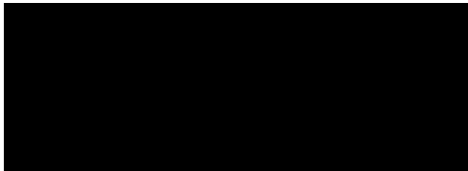
As I see it nothing has changed since the previous application, except from the fact that this latest proposal is far more expansive and intrusive, being for four semi detached dwellings as opposed to a single storey bungalow. Given these circumstances, I do not see how this development can be given the go ahead.

Conclusion

I do hope that you will seriously consider the reasons for my objection to this development, and bear in mind the Council has in the past refused successive proposals from this applicant for far less intrusive developments on this site.

I implore you to do the right thing for the residents of Clare Court and Barnham Road, in addition to the rest of the village and refuse this application.

Your sincerely



Haydn Vaughan