



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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by email

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Dear Neil,

Re: recent planning documents

My council's Planning & Licensing Committee has asked me to contact you regarding concerns it has with recent decisions and Planning Officer's reports supporting those decisions.

I would like to use Planning Application EP/48/21/HH as an example of the concerns the committee has. This Application was for 2 Bay Tree Garden, one of a cul-de-sac of just three properties.

Starting with the Decision Notice, there is one item of especial concern. Condition 3 reads, "The dormer windows in the rear elevation of the dwelling for bathroom and two bedroom windows shall be glazed with obscured glass and non-opening above 1.7m." Unless we are very much misinterpreting this, these windows should be non-opening **BELOW** 1.7m, shouldn't they? In other decisions notices making this same point, the wording has indeed been "below 1.7m".

The committee has the following concerns about the Officer's Report for the same Application.

Firstly, what the committee perceives to be inaccuracies:

Description of application states that the site is "in an area with mixed character". This is not so, as stated above, Bay Tree Garden is a small, compact cul-de-sac with a very specific character.

The statement in the representations section that objection had been made that "Materials of the development is not in keeping with the host dwelling" is inaccurate. The objections were that the materials proposed for the finish of the whole building were inappropriate for this area and did not harmonise with neighbouring properties.

The Officer states that "there are number of similar developments in the local vicinity and no harm to visual amenity such that refusal could be justified is caused" citing Bay Trees Close. There are no jarring colour schemes in this road, and the Close is a separate cul-de-sac, so this comment is perhaps irrelevant. Bay Tree Garden is a particularly small close with only three houses of similar design and materials; this council thinks it is important the colour of proposed materials is in keeping.

(cont'd overleaf)

Secondly, what the committee perceives to be a failure to address an objection:

The Development Plan Policies cited by the Officer do not include Policy 4 (Design in Character Area 3) of the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – unlike other Officers' Reports on other applications, which always mention the relevant Character Area policies for development proposals.

This leads to quoting - under "PRINCIPLE" – that as well as key policies (D DM1 and D DM4) of the Local Plan, East Preston's NP "policy NER1 has direct relevance to this application". There is no such Policy. Policy 1 of the NP does indeed have relevance as it outlines general principles for Housing; Policy 1.i. "the scale, density [...] layout and materials of all development proposals, including alterations to existing buildings, reflect and enhance the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings". As outlined above in 4, NP Policy 4 is not considered. Policy 4.ii. is especially relevant: "employ building materials that harmonise with those used in existing buildings". This particular policy was actually cited in detail by one of the objectors.

Thirdly, what the committee perceives to be a failure to address an objection:

The Officer's response to the objection to materials was "Materials proposed (roof tiles) to match with host dwelling/ timber cladding is common material used for dormer extensions." This does not address the objections made, in that these materials, being a complete change from the original ones, would change the appearance of the house completely and would not therefore fit in with its neighbours in this tiny close.

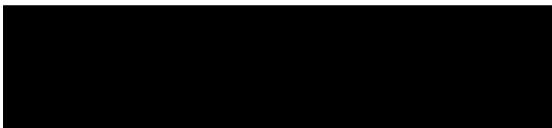
Finally, there are some proof-reading errors, including but not limited to:

In the third paragraph of "Design and Visual Amenity", "Taking account [...] the proposal does warrant refusal." Presumably "does not warrant refusal" is meant. The following sentence appears to have some words omitted too.

We appreciate the overall decision cannot be changed, but I believe the Decision Notice can be withdrawn and a corrected one issued.

Please could you confirm the points in this letter have noted and that greater care will be taken in both Officer Reports and Decision Notices in future.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Cross – Clerk to the Council