



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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16th July 2009

Dear Miss Hearsey

Re: EP/90/09, Churchfield, Station Road, East Preston

At its meeting on Monday, 13th July, the Planning Committee of this Parish Council agreed to object to this Application on the following grounds –

1. The proposed development would adversely affect the setting of St. Mary's Church, which is a Grade 1 Listed Building and would therefore conflict with Policy DEV 11 of the Arun District Local Plan.
2. The proposed building of a terrace of 2½-storey modern terraced houses and the end of a block of 2½-storey flats, both brick and tile hung rendering, close to the boundary of the church conflicts with policies GEN 7 and DEV 11 of the Local Plan. The urban style buildings do not respond positively to the characteristics of the site and does not respect and enhance the special qualities of the 12th Century Grade 1 Listed Church. Although the proposed tree planting will partially screen the buildings, if the trees were removed the setting of the Listed Building would be damaged by the inappropriate development.
3. The proposed development would be unsympathetic to adjoining buildings and detract from the character and appearance of the adjoining conservation area around St. Mary's Church.
4. The proposal does not provide for vehicle parking in accordance with Policy GEN 12 of the Local Plan. The total number of parking spaces is 21, which is significantly lower than the standard parking provision of 33 spaces recommended for this level of redevelopment. The under-provision would lead to an increase in on-street parking on the B2140, which is already a very busy distributor road and bus route, interrupt the free-flow of traffic and introduce hazards for other highway users. The location is on the approach to a bend, close to a bus stop and is frequently used for church parking on Sundays and on occasions such as weddings and funerals. Additional on-street parking will exacerbate the problems currently encountered.
5. Furthermore, there is no defined turning circle, which may result in service vehicles and removal vans having to reverse into Station Road when exiting the site.

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6. The proposed boundary treatment of loop top railings to the east and west boundaries would be out of keeping and unsympathetic to the street scene and conservation area and the rural setting of Langmead Recreation Ground.
7. The proposed development which is essentially urban in appearance also constitutes an overdevelopment of the site, would clearly not be in harmony with the local environment and would not enhance the characteristics of an area that is valued.

It is very clear that the present proposal conflicts with Policy DEV 11 which requires that development close to listed buildings “should be sensitively designed and constructed of appropriate materials to ensure that the special qualities of the older buildings remain unimpaired” and that “proposals which affect the setting of a Listed Building will be resisted.”

In order to satisfy the criteria of Policy GEN 7 and Policy DEV 11 the applicant should consider a more modest scheme that should be in local style and materials that protect and enhance the visual characteristics of the area; that is much further away from the churchyard boundary – preferably displaced to the north boundary; that does not have loop top iron railings to the east and west boundaries; that does not destroy the historical appearance of the south boundary flint wall and takes account of any unacceptable adverse impacts that may arise; retains open amenity areas and protects the setting of the Listed Church building by retaining and adding to the present planting of trees and bushes to the south boundary.

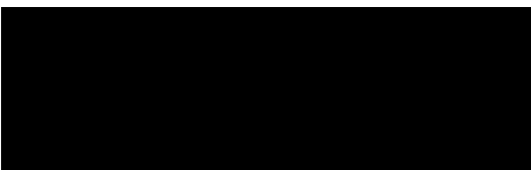
The Parish Council believes that repositioning the south leg of terraced houses to the north of the site would significantly reduce the adverse impact on the setting of St. Mary’s Church.

Both the County Planning Officer and the Conservation Planning Officers considered that the first application, EP/41/07, was inappropriate for this very sensitive site, was not to a required standard for its setting and required a more modest scheme of only two storeys.

This proposal does not meet the criteria recommended by the Planning and Highways Officers and in addition to failing to meet the requirements of the Arun District Local Plan, the proposal conflicts with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states that developments which affect a Listed Building or its setting “shall have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special... historic interest.”

Churchfield is a highly sensitive site being very prominent in its location next to a Grade I Listed church and on the border of the adjoining conservation area. Both the County Planning Officer and the Conservation Planning Officer considered that previous Applications for this site were inappropriate, were not to a required standard for its setting and required a more modest scheme of only two storeys.

The Council therefore considers that this application in its present form should be REFUSED.



Simon Cross - **Clerk to the Council**