

Sent: 29 July 2014 17:33
To: Damian Sullivan
Subject: 12 Tamarisk Way, East Preston EP/93/14/HH

Dear Mr Sullivan,

Thank you for calling me this afternoon to inform me that you were planning to refuse the above application mainly down to its flat roof design, which you feel is inappropriate in the area. In responding to you I also wish to respond to the comments made on the application by the East Preston and Kingston Preservation Society which contain a number of spurious and subjective claims which are without grounding or fact.

Response to comments made by the East Preston and Kingston Preservation Society.

The suggestion that a nearby property with a flat roof, rendered walls and small windows is somehow acceptable, but the proposal as shown in the application with a rectangular facade with most of it faced with glass is unacceptable, is subjective to say the least. As you will know from visiting the site the existing house is of a rectangular shape and already has a large area of flat roof over the garage and entrance hall area. In addition the house already has a large area of glass on the south elevation.

The Preservation Society appear to be desiring a situation where all houses resemble in some form their neighbours, yet the house at 12 Tamarisk Way as it stands is as different from it's neighbour to the west as is possible to get. The existing house is significantly taller than the neighbouring property which is a chalet bungalow under a hipped roof. The neighbouring bungalow has great visual interest through the use of the projecting front gable, the dormer and side extension whereas the existing house at number 12 has little visual interest from the road due to it being flat fronted with the only interest arising from the stepping of the lower flat roofed garage and entrance back from the main flat fronted facade. You would think that a proposal which would lower the height of the house to a similar height to the neighbour to the west, whilst at the same time adding visual interest in the form of projecting elements would be supported by the Preservation Society.

Whilst the Preservation Society would like to see the application refused on the basis that the proposal does not sit comfortably in its surroundings, is yet another subjective unsubstantiated claim. My Design Statement drew attention to the wide mixture of designs and styles found in the area and it is my opinion that it is the rich diversity of styles that makes the area so attractive. The proposal takes what is quite a mundane house and transforms it into a high calibre design, the proposal is based on the properties orientation, its location near to the sea and the scale of the neighbouring properties, all of which appear to have been overlooked when the original 1960s house was built.

The concluding comment by the Preservation Society that "the proposed house is not what most residents would not like to see built" is without a shred of evidence and is not what my client has experienced when talking to his neighbours and discussing the project with actual residents who live in the road.

Response to your concerns

I understand that you have concerns about the flat roof design and share the Preservation Society's view that the proposal would be out of keeping in the road. I see no logic to your suggestion that in this instance a flat roof is inappropriate but in other areas of the Arun District area a flat roofed property would work if it were "directly on the seafront".

The style of design shown in the proposal is called "Contemporary" today, but flat roofed houses have been around for some 90 years. The proposal shown in the application plans and Design Statement utilises an earlier style and updates it with modern materials such as triple glazing and high levels of insulation to make it relevant for today. The inspiration for the design of the proposal therefore dates back to the flat roofed Art Deco houses of the 1920s and 1930s which are found in urban and suburban areas across the country and not necessarily near the sea. Perhaps the most celebrated flat roofed house is the Schröder House in Utrecht, Holland which was built in 1924 and is now a Unesco World Heritage site, that house is again in an urban or suburban setting not next to the sea.

Thinking about the planning issue of placing flat roofed houses directly next to the sea, assumes that the design is all about taking account of the location overlooking water, great if you are in a boat; but surely the same issues of whether development is appropriate or not to it's neighbours would be the same. In fact someone standing in a street with one side of houses facing the sea and the other side being on the landward side would be unlikely to tell which side overlooked the sea. Having a flat roof on a sea front location would also inhibit rather than help the design, as it would restrict the possibility of having large gables of glass to bring light and uninterrupted views of the sea and sky deep into the house.

Therefore your suggestion that flat roofed houses should go next to the sea, has no historical bearing, design merit or planning basis at all.

Like the Schröder house, the proposal before you has been designed with a specific client, location and orientation in mind and is not simply a mundane 1960s house that has been dropped into it's location without taking account of it's surroundings. Far from being out of keeping with the area, the remodelling of the 1960s house at number 12 Tamarisk Way to create a well designed flat roofed house will simply enrich the diversity of houses and visual interest in the area to the benefit of all of the residents. Of course the neighbours to the front and rear will gain by being able to look out on to a house that has a roof height some 2m lower than currently exists.

I am sorry that you find the design not to your liking and are planning to refuse the application and I thank you for your suggestion that we could withdraw the application at this stage, however my client would like to see the application run its course. Naturally I would hope the above comments will be taken into account before deciding the outcome of the application.

Regards

Nigel Lewis

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