

This statement is provided by the applicant in response to the representations made on planning application FG/46/21/PL

Character

It is noted that some representations expressed that the development is uncharacteristic of the area. Page 4 of the Design and Access Statements (DAS) provides a selection of images indicating the mixed suburban character of the area with a range of footprints, heights and material pallets being found locally. The DAS demonstrates how the proposals responds to this suburban character in its scale, form and materiality. Therefore it would be unreasonable to conclude the development is uncharacteristic in this respect.

The height of development, containing accommodation within the roof space but not being a full 2 storeys, corresponds with the scale of 1 The Grove and the garage associate with 32 Brook Lane that sit opposite the site. The height helps to create a step between the two-storey properties of 28-30 Brook Lane and the bungalows on the Grove. The positioning of the development, the stepping footprint and design of the roof pitches, as demonstrated through the DAS, have been carefully considered such that the proposals responds to local character in accordance with Arun Local Plan policy and Arun's Design Guide. This form is such that it will mitigate the risk that the development appears large in relation to the plot size, and most notably will present itself to the road and the public in a similar manner to many exiting properties in the area. Therefore it would be unreasonable to conclude it is out of character with the local area.

Several representations noted that the development is too big for the plot, and that the local area is characterised by small properties on larger gardens. It has also been noted that the proposal does not conform with the Arun Design Guidance which seeks gardens of 10.5m long and a separation distance of 21m to neighbouring developments. Justification for departing from this guidance is set out on Pages 10 and 14 of the DAS. A further review of the local area below demonstrates that the existing pattern of development locally does not conform with this guidance, many of the existing gardens are not 10.5m deep nor do they provide a separation of 21m between properties. Therefore it would be unreasonable to conclude that it is uncharacteristic of the area to provide a compact property on a compact plot as proposed in this application. Furthermore design solutions have been provided to mitigate any impacts on neighbours as set out in the DAS and in the following paragraphs.



Image showing a selection of back garden depths and separation distances between neighbouring properties in the local area. These do not conform with the Arun Design Guide distances and therefore exemplify why such guidance should be applied with consideration to what is characteristic of the local area. With this in mind, the scale of the development in relation to its plot site and its relationship with neighbouring properties should be considered characteristic of the area and therefore acceptable.

The Arun Design Guide, whilst providing recommended distances, also advocates for new developments responding to existing patterns of development. Recent appeals have such as FG/59/19/HH also supports the assessment of schemes based on common separation distances in the area.

Overbearing, Overshadowing and Overlooking

As demonstrated above, the scale of development is such that it would be in character with the area and therefore can not be reasonably be considered to be overbearing in its wider context. A number of representations raised concerns relating to overbearing and overshadowing direct neighbours. The DAS demonstrates that due to the positioning of the development, it would conform with the 25° line as drawn from 2m high on neighbouring windows to the south of the proposal, complying with BRE guidance. The pitches of the roof are such that they taper down towards the garden of 24-30 Brook Lane (refer to Page 12 of the DAS), minimising the appearance of the development from these properties. The positioning of the plot in relation to these properties also means that there would be no overshadowing during much of the day, and any late afternoon shadows as the sun sets would be over the driveway area to the rear of 24 Brook Lane. The image on the previous page also identifies similar adjacencies in the area. Therefore it would be unreasonable to conclude that the development would be overbearing or overshadow these properties and gardens.

There may be some overshadowing to the north, however this area is used as driveways to access neighbouring properties and the front garden to 11 The Grove. The front garden to 11 The Grove is already sheltered along its southern boundary with a fence, planting and a mature tree which provide a barrier between that property and the proposal. Therefore it would be unreasonable to conclude that the development would be overbearing, impact privacy or meaningfully overshadow this property and garden.

It is also noted that the orientation of the development and positioning of windows has been carefully considered such that there is no direct overlooking to habitable rooms or private amenity space in neighbouring properties. This provides mitigation in accordance with the Arun Design Guide against the smaller separation distances to neighbouring properties proposed in this application. This provides further justification for the acceptability of the proposal in this respect.

Parking

Several representations have commented that the parking provision is insufficient, despite two spaces being provided in accordance with the relevant guidance. Whilst one of these spaces is smaller than the minimum space standards, the Local Highways Authority noted that this space could still be utilised by a smaller vehicle and have not objected to the proposal. Therefore in this respect the development should be considered acceptable.

Access to Neighbouring Properties

Representations have noted concerns that the development would impact access to 24 Brook Lane and wider impact on vehicle movements along The Grove. There is an 8ft legal easement over the applicants land to the driveway to the rear of 24 Brook Lane; the red-line boundary of the proposal does not encroach on this easement and therefore this easement will not be impacted by the proposal. Representations have also raised concerns about visibility splays from this driveway onto The Grove, however the visibility provided is similar to other driveway arrangements onto The Grove which are commonly limited by the existence of neighbouring dwellings, fences and hedgerows. It is also noted that the Local Highways Authority did not raise any concerns relating to visibility splays or vehicle movements along The Grove. Therefore in this respect the development should be considered acceptable.

Maintenance & proximity to eastern boundary

Although maintenance is not a planning matter, representations raising concern to the build-ability and maintenance of the eastern wall of the proposal have been responded to with a revised elevation recently submitted. The material now proposed for this elevation is brick; this can be built overhand and therefore would not require access to the neighbouring property. Brick is a low maintenance material so there would be minimal requirement for access in this respect, however it is noted there are legal mechanisms for maintenance access that sit outside of planning (The Access to Neighbouring Land Act 1992) should access be required in the future. It is also noted that it is not uncommon for buildings to be built up to or in close proximity to boundaries, therefore this should not be a material factor in determining the application.

Principle of Infill

Some representations disputed the acceptability of infill development in this location and that it is not common in the area. The principle of infill development is supported by the Arun Local Plan and the Arun Design Guide. There are a number of examples where infill development has occurred locally recently.

Conclusion

There have been a significant number of representations in support of the development which will provide a sustainable smaller home to help meet the local housing need. Whilst it is respected that the plot presents several constraints, it has been demonstrated in this statement and the DAS that the proposal responds to these to mitigate any impacts and deviance from policy & guidance in a manner that accords with local character and such that on-balance the development should be considered acceptable.