

Design & Access Statement

**PROPOSAL:
DEMOLITION OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL
BUILDINGS/GARAGES AND ERECTION OF 3 X 2 BED TERRACED
HOUSES ALONG WITH PROVISION OF ANCILLARY PARKING,
TURNING AND LANDSCAPING (RE-SUBMISSION OF
APPLICATION REF. WA/52/13)**



**DEANS YARD
ORCHARD WAY, FONTWELL
WEST SUSSEX BN18 0SB**

Design Component

Amount of Development

Consent is here sought for a terrace of 3 x 2 bed dwellings. The accommodation would comprise a kitchen, wc and living room on the ground floor with two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a home office/study on the first floor.

Layout

The terrace block would be orientated to front due west with rear gardens running towards the east boundary of the site. Off-street parking for four cars is shown, two down the north side of the block and two at the end of the access road. Areas of landscaping are allowed for within and around the access and parking area. The terrace block would be sited centrally on the plot with roughly equidistant spacings to the north and south boundaries. The minimum distance to the south boundary would be approximately 4.1 metres, whilst that to the north boundary would be 5 metres. The depth of rear gardens would vary between 7.5 to 8.5 metres. A wall to wall distance between the south flank of the proposed terrace and the north flank of 2 Deans Close would be 5.1 metres.

Appearance

A simple rectangular two storey building is proposed having a fully hipped plain tile roof. The front elevation (the public face of the building) would be articulated with individual gabled timber porches and the first floor would comprise flint work set within red brick quoins. The side and rear elevations would be constructed in red brick set within quoin edges.

Scale

A two storey block is proposed having a maximum height to ridge of 8.75 metres.

Landscaping

There is scope for additional landscaping within the front forecourt area, including planting along the edge of the proposed access road. It is felt that landscaping could be the subject of a planning condition on any consent but, as regards planting within the rear garden of the properties, this is something best left to future owners.

The Context Appraisal

Deans Yard comprises a backland site accessed between the frontage properties of nos. 16 and 18 Orchard Way. It comprises a block of 6 commercial units laid out across the site close to the east boundary. These units are of a somewhat utilitarian and untidy appearance and have been used for a mixture of storage and industrial uses over the years. The site measures approximately 0.1 hectares in area. To the east lie modern residential properties within Hunters Mews. Part of the rear garden of 6 Hunters Mews backs onto part of the site whilst 7 Hunters Mews flanks onto the east boundary of the site. The east boundary of the site is characterised by 6 metre high leylandii trees. The south boundary abutts the flank wall of 2 Deans Close. The rear garden to this property runs along the south boundary and finishes level with the east boundary of the site. The west boundary runs along the side of 16 Orchard Way whilst the north boundary runs behind nos. 18 and 20 Orchard Way.

The area is characterised by post-War housing comprising predominantly detached properties, although nos. 14 and 16 Orchard Way are a pair of semis. There is terraced housing within the settlement further to the south.

Evaluation

This application is submitted as an amended proposal to that refused under application WA/52/13. This application was refused consent alleging a cramped form of development, a shortfall in garden sizes, marginal shortfalls in certain room sizes, overshadowing of 2 Deans Close and a failure to make adequate contribution towards affordable housing through a financial payment.

The main amendment is to the siting of the block in a more central position to pull it further away from 2 Deans Close. 2 Deans Close is, perhaps, the one property that this development will have any significant visual relationship with. By pulling the block 4.1 metres off the south boundary, a flank to flank minimum distance of 5.1 metres can be achieved between the terrace and 2 Deans Close. This is a much more spacious arrangement which pulls the block a sufficient distance away from the neighbouring property to the south to ensure an appropriate neighbourly relationship.

On this point it should further be noted that the relationship between the existing commercial building and 2 deans close is a poor one which will be relieved by this proposal. The existing building sits hard up on the mutual boundary with 2 Deans Close and runs for much of the length of the rear garden to this property. The height of the building whilst nominally single storey is much taller than a standard 1.8m high boundary fence or wall which would apply if the building were demolished. The redevelopment here proposed produces a far more neighbourly relationship and it is noted that, even with the original application, the occupier of 2 Deans Close had no objection to the development.

The depth of gardens falls slightly below the minimum standards set out in emerging Development Plan policies (D DM2 and D DM3). These space standards are for guidance purposes only and represent 'best practise' and not standards that should be unyieldingly applied. Clearly, greenfield development could normally be expected to meet these standards but, where previously developed land within the built up area is being redeveloped, such as is the case here, a more common sense and flexible approach is justified. In any event, these space standards are emerging policies only and cannot carry much weight at this stage. As regards the area of available garden, now that these are two bed units, the two end units meet the required standard whilst the centre unit is slightly below the 50m² requirement. These 2 end units would also produce the required depth of garden when measured from along the side gardens and not from the rear building line.

As regards space standards for the houses themselves, a two bed four person dwelling should have an essentially general internal area of 83m², this is met by this proposal. Other standards include a 7.5m² kitchen, a 14.8m² living room and 12m² double bedroom. These are also met by this proposal. Again, the weight that can be attached to these internal space standard policies is very limited at this stage of the Development Plan process.

In re-submitting this scheme what was shown as the third bedroom has now been put over to a study/home office. If so required the stud wall between bed 2 and the home office could be removed to produce one larger double bedroom. This is a point on which further negotiation would be considered. However we see no reason as to why the smaller of the 3 first floor rooms cannot be legitimately defined as a study/home office.

The reason for refusal relating to character and the cramped nature of the development does not really stand scrutiny. The proposed terrace block has very comfortable spacings to the sides (a minimum of 4.1 metres). The gardens are of a reasonably good depth and the new block would not have any cramped or tight visual relationship with any neighbouring house. Adequate off-street parking is available within the site. In fact, the existing commercial units sit in a far more cramped position in relation to the north, south and west boundaries of the site and therefore this redevelopment produces a more spacious and well planned development.

Whilst terrace housing is proposed in contrast to the predominantly detached nature of immediately surrounding housing, this is not a major factor in this instance. This is partly because this is a self-contained backland site that has no visual relationship to the street scene on surrounding roads. It is already something of an oddity in that it contains a terrace of 6 commercial units. In our opinion there is no reason why a small terrace of houses, provided it is appropriately sited and designed, should not be accommodated here.

As regards social housing contributions, this was the subject of much discussion with the Planning Authority at the time of the earlier application with the Council's own Enabling Officer agreeing by email dated the 31st January 2014, a reduced contribution of £18,369. A viability exercise was undertaken using the standard tool kit and it was demonstrated that the viability of this proposal justified a reduced contribution. Therefore attached to this application is a Section 106 Agreement promising to pay the previously agreed sum in addition to a small monitoring charge of £150.

12.8.14