

2 Downview Road, Yapton, BN18 0HS: Proposed Terrace of four Houses – Context Notes



Junction of Downview Rd and Burndell Road, looking towards Climping, Ryebank Walk on right

Although the site address of this site is in Downview Road, the part of the plot forming the site of this application faces onto Burndell Road, which originally was a linear settlement along the south-west side of the road, comprising houses placed close to the pavement backing onto a variety of agricultural, horticultural and industrial uses behind.

Apart from a few scattered cottages and farm buildings, the land on the north-east side of the road seems to have been purely agricultural well into the 20th Century, with the earliest non-agricultural building appearing to be the small terrace that 2 Downview Road itself is part of.

The orientation of the terrace is somewhat mystifying, unless it was intended to be part of a larger development that incorporated diagonal streets, or was perhaps intended to be the first stage of a sizeable crescent, that was halted before completion, maybe because of the Great Depression or the Second World War. This orientation resulted in the plots of the terrace being irregularly shaped, and the first house, no 2, had a larger garden than others, which at that time extended to what was probably intended to be an Improvement Line for Burndell Road.

After the war, while the Airfield was being used as Air-Sea Rescue Base, land further to the south on the north west side of the road was developed for housing, and gradually was filled in stages until it reached the Recreation Ground, with the distributor roads running at right angles to the Road, and the houses mainly comprising semi-detached or short terraces.

At the beginning of this period it would appear that a generous building / improvement line set-back was intended, but this seems to have been relaxed so that parts of the newer development, particularly in Goodhew Close were built well in front of the original line. At this time, the garden of no 2 was extended close to the pavement, by purchasing land from West Sussex County Council.

The boundary at the southwest of the Site of the proposed development runs diagonally to Burndell Road, and although it acts to some extent as a visibility splay, it was become overgrown with cypress trees that tend to block visibility, and the splay does seem rather large for its function, and it does make more sense to think of it as the end of a Crescent that would have swung round and joined the road again nearer the Recreation Ground. But this results in no.2 Downview Road having a disproportionately large rhomboid-shaped side-garden, and rather than mainly being used for leisure, until cleared very recently it has also been used for storage of vehicles and building materials. There is a concrete shed base alongside the pavement that probably once was covered by a timber shed, but now supports a large framed marquee structure.

A further disincentive to use the garden for leisure is the three storey Ryebank Walk development directly oppose, built close to the pavement, with tiny yards and car parking behind, which overlooks the garden leaving no possibility of privacy.

The Applicant believes this Site would support the proposed development and would result in a socially beneficial use of this inefficiently used land. He believes that he has taken care in the proposal to limit any degradation of the amenity of adjoining properties, far less so than how the site itself has had its amenity compromised by adjoining development.

Visually, the existence of the cypress and other trees at the Downview Road junction already form something of a constriction at this part of the village, and would effectively hide the proposed terrace on the approach from the Westerly, Barnham, direction. And from the East, the outline of the proposed houses would be exceeded by the trees, and are designed to have a bulk that is more like the adjoining buildings on the northeast of road rather than those on the southwest.



Although there is accommodation on three floors, the design attempts to limit the overall height of the proposed houses to something in scale with its neighbours, in the order of about one to two metres less high at the ridge than the Ryebank Walk buildings, and about one metre taller than the existing terrace containing 2 Downview Road.

The layout of the houses is designed so that only one habitable room per house (a first floor bedroom) faces Ryebank Walk. And at the rear, the upper windows face the side wall of the existing terrace.

The accommodation of the proposed houses is in accordance with Nationally Described Standards.

The rear garden area and distance to boundary does not fully meet recommended standards in every instance, but nevertheless does provide usable and enjoyable spaces that would be sufficient for many small families without in any way providing low-quality facilities. It is noted that the Houses in Ryebank Walk have smaller back yards, and the Flats there appear to have no exterior spaces.

The proposed houses would be well-fitted out, and energy-efficient with air-source heatpump heating, charging points for electric vehicles, and good insulation, helping to make the houses as affordable as possible for the occupants.

Compared with what is generally available locally, the Applicant believes this is the kind of development the current revisions to the Planning Acts are trying to enable, namely an efficient use of small or difficult plots by Small or Medium Enterprises, to meet local needs and provide particularly local benefits for local trades and suppliers, something the larger developers do not always achieve.

Yapton of course is strongly identified as a sustainable location, and the Applicant believes that providing a few more homes here without building over agricultural land is both appropriate and desirable.