

R09

F/TH/17/0139

PROPOSAL: Erection of a detached 2-storey dwelling

LOCATION: Land Rear Of 10 Cornford Road BIRCHINGTON Kent

WARD: Birchington South

AGENT: Mr John Lowden

APPLICANT: Mr Jason Bailey

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse Permission

For the following reason:

- 1 The dwelling, by virtue of the small plot size and 2m high close boarded fence to the front amenity space, would result in a cramped and over intensive development with the fence as a detrimental and incongruous feature which fails to respect the surrounding pattern of development and the character and appearance of the area, to the detriment of the visual amenities of the locality, contrary to saved policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan D1 and paragraphs 17, 56 and 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The application site lies within an established residential area in Birchington. The area is largely characterised by semi-detached (with some terraced properties) set back from the road with front gardens generally set behind low walls/small hedges and large rear gardens. The gaps between properties vary, but it is not uncommon for dwellings to cover nearly the whole of the width of their site with only a couple of metres between plots.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The site has no relevant planning history.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Planning consent is sought for the erection of a detached two storey dwelling within the rear garden of 10 Cornford Road.

The proposed dwelling would sit within a rectangular application site of approximately and designed to front Farrar Road. The dwelling would have a footprint of approximately 49.6sqm. A new close boarded fence is proposed to separate the application plot from no. 10 Cornford Road with the proposed dwelling. The proposed application site would adjoin

no 20 Farrar Road and would be set in some 5.5m from the public highway with an off road parking space and amenity area (with cycle store) surrounded by 2m high close boarded fencing proposed to the front. A small paved area is proposed to the side and rear of the proposed dwelling.

The proposed dwelling would be traditional in terms of design and materials (plain tiles, stock bricks and UPVc double glazed units). The dwelling would have a hall, kitchen, lounge, WC and small store to the ground floor with two bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor level. It would have a ridge height of 3.7 metres and 2.5m to the eaves.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan 2006

H1 - Residential Development Sites;
D1 - Design Principles;
SR5 - Play Space;
TR5 - Cycling; and
TR16 - Car Parking Provision

NOTIFICATIONS

Letters were sent to adjoining occupiers and a site notice displayed near the site.

One representation objecting to the application has been received and their comments are summarised below:

Too close to adjoining property - only a couple of metres from the side of my property;
Will block all light from the side windows of my property - one bedroom, one kitchen, one hall and an upstairs landing;
The proposal will mean that my property will be overlooked in both the front and rear gardens and a window would be directly opposite my landing window;
The development is being built on the width of a small garden so there is almost no garden space;
An extra neighbour packed into a small development space will increase noise;
The development plot is much smaller than the surrounding plots (appears to be less than half the size);
The size of the proposed house will be smaller than the surrounding houses making it look out of place;
The only open views I have from my property are to the side where this development is proposed; and
Loss of light to rear garden as it is north east facing

Birchington Parish Council: Would like to object - it is overdevelopment and not in keeping with the street scene.

CONSULTATIONS

Southern Water: A public water distribution mains crosses the site. The exact position of the public water main must be determined on site by the applicant before the layout of the proposed development is finalised.

All existing infrastructure, including protective coatings and cathodic protection, should be protected during the course of construction works. No excavation, mounding or tree planting should be carried out within 4 metres of the public water main without consent from Southern Water.

A formal application to Southern Water is required for a connection to the public foul sewer.

Initial investigations indicate that there are no public surface water sewers in the area to serve this development. Alternative means of draining surface water from this development is required. This should not include disposal to a public foul sewer.

COMMENTS

This application is reported to committee at the request of Cllr Brimm for Members to consider whether this proposal would have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the street scene.

Principle of Development

This application seeks permission for the erection of a two storey bedroom dwelling in the rear garden of 10 Cornford Road.

The development would represent development on non-previously developed land which would be contrary to saved Policy H1 of the Thanet Local Plan; however this needs to be considered having regard to the fact that there is a current need for housing in Thanet and, on this basis, the National Planning Policy Framework NPPF requires that applications for housing should be considered in the context of sustainable development.

The principle of developing the site is therefore considered to be acceptable and consistent with the principles of the NPPF, subject to the consideration of other material considerations. The main considerations for this application are the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the living conditions of neighbours and the future occupiers of the proposed dwelling and impacts on the highway network.

Character and Appearance

As set out above, this area of Birchington is an established residential area where properties are set back from the road with generally front gardens generally separated from the public highway by low walls/hedges. Whilst the gaps between properties vary, it is not uncommon for properties to nearly cover the full width of their plots.

The proposed dwelling would sit adjacent to no. 20 Farrar Road (albeit 0.5m forward of that dwelling) and would be set in approximately 1.2m from the boundary with no. 20 and some 2.5 metres from its flank wall. No objection is raised to this arrangement as it mirrors many other relationships within the area.

It is, however, noted that the proposed dwelling would be set only 1.5 metres (at its widest point) from the rear boundary of the site. This is out of character with the large rear gardens of the other properties in the surrounding area. It is considered that the proposed dwelling would appear as a cramped, contrived overdevelopment of the site when viewed from Farrar Road.

As the private amenity space that could be provided to the rear of the property is clearly inadequate to meet the requirements of a family dwelling, the applicant has sought to provide amenity space to the front of the dwelling. In order to make this a private space for the future occupiers of the dwelling, it is proposed to enclose this area with a two metre high close boarded fence. The introduction of close boarding fencing to the front of the dwelling would be at odds with the open nature of the frontages of the other dwellings with the area.

The proposed dwelling with its associated close boarded fencing to the proposed amenity area would be a cramped and incongruous feature at odds with the prevailing character and appearance of the area with properties with large rear gardens and low boundaries to the front gardens allowing open views into them. There are no other examples in the surrounding area with the fronts of dwellings set behind high boundary fences/walls. It is noted that along the first part of Farrar Road (leading to nos 20 and 21) there is high close boarded fencing and hedging, but this is to the boundary of the side gardens of no 10. Cornfield Road itself and its neighbour no. 8 Cornfield Road.

It is also noted that due to the need to provide the amenity area to the front of the proposed dwelling has resulted in a patio door being provided to its front dwelling. These doors would be visible from Farrar Road and out of keeping with the other dwellings within the area. Whilst this would not necessarily be considered poor design, it highlights how the restricted size of the site has led to compromises in terms of design. It is also noted that the proposed cycle store would also have to be located to the front amenity space, which is unusual and out of character within the street scene.

Living Conditions

The proposed dwelling would be located in the rear garden of 10 Cornford Road, but fronting onto Farrar Road. It is considered that no. 10 would retain an adequate area of garden land to the rear together with areas to the side and front. The flank wall of the proposed dwelling would be located some 9.8m from the rear wall of no. 10 and it is noted that no windows are proposed to that side elevation. The length of the rear garden that would remain to serve no. 10 is considered to be similar to others in the locality and it is not considered that the two storey flank wall of the proposed dwelling would create a sense of enclosure for the occupiers of no. 10. It is, therefore, considered that the proposed dwelling would have no adverse effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of no. 10.

In terms of the proposed dwellings relationship with no. 12 Cornford Road. It would again sit some 9.8m from its rear elevation (measuring diagonally the closest corner of the proposed dwelling to the rear elevation of no. 12 - 10m). There is a two metre high fence separating the application site from the garden of number 12 and the proposed dwelling would also be partially obscured by a single storey outbuilding in the rear garden of no 12. To avoid overlooking to rear garden of no. 12 the proposed dwelling has been designed with high level windows to the first floor at the rear. These could be secured by condition and with this in place; it is not considered that there would be any adverse effect on the residential amenities of number 12 Cornford Road from the proposed development.

As set out above, the proposed dwelling would sit 0.5m forward of the adjacent no. 20 Farrar Road. It would be set in approximately 1.2m from the boundary with no. 20 and some 2.5 metres from its flank wall. There is a one window in the flank wall serving a landing and it is considered that this could be obscure glazed to avoid any issues with overlooking. Given the relationship between the properties and the high level windows to the rear, it is not considered that the proposed dwelling would result in loss of light to No. 20 or overlooking to its rear garden. It is not considered that the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of no. 20.

It is acknowledged that the introduction of the proposed dwelling would result in additional windows to the front which could have views over the side garden of no 8 Cornfield Road and the front garden of no. 21 Farrar Road.

No. 8 Cornford Road is on the opposite side of the road from the application and given the 2m high boundary fence to the side garden, it is considered that would be limited potential for overlooking from the proposed dwelling. As such, there would be no adverse affect on teh residential amenities of teh occupiers of no. 8 from the proposed development.

No. 21 Farrar Road is also on the opposite side of the road (opposite no. 20). As with other properties in Farrar Road, the front garden of no 21 is essentially already open with only a low boundary treatment. The introduction of the proposed dwelling would not, therefore, have any additional adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of no. 21.

Given the high boundary fencing to the side garden of no 8 Cornfield Road and that the front garden of no. 21 (as with the other properties within Farrar Road is already open to view given its low boundary treatment.

The proposed dwelling would have a footprint of approximately 49sqm and has a simple layout with a lounge, kitchen and WC to the ground floor and two bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor. This arrangement and scale of accommodation within the proposed dwelling is considered acceptable. It is noted that to avoid overlooking issues to the garden of number 12 Cornford Road, the first floor windows in the rear elevation would be level. These windows are shown to serve a bathroom and landing and it is not considered that this would result in an unacceptable effect on the residential amenities of the future occupiers of the proposed dwelling.

The application site is 108sqm. Given the set back of the dwelling within the site, as mentioned above, the proposed dwelling would be set back within the site leaving only 1.5m

from the rear of the proposed dwelling to the back of the application site (at its widest point). This is not considered to be adequate private amenity space to serve the future occupiers of the property.

The applicants have sought to provide amenity space, surrounded by 2m high close boarded fence to the front of the property adjacent to the proposed car parking space. Whilst this is a relatively small area, the council does not have space standards for gardens/amenity areas and it is considered that this would meet the requirements for doorstep play space set out in saved policy SR5. It is, however, noted that the outlook for the future occupiers of the dwelling from their lounge window (albeit just over 5m away) would be this fencing. Whilst this is not considered ideal, and may put certain potential occupiers off the property, it is not considered significantly harmful to warrant the reason for refusal on this ground.

Highways

The proposed dwelling would be served by one off road parking space. Visibility splays for this proposed parking space would need to be secured by a condition. There are no parking controls on Cornford Road or Farrar Road and it is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on parking in the locality.

Farrar Road is a residential street with a 30 mph speed limit surrounding by other streets of a similar character. It is not considered that the proposed modest dwelling would generate significant vehicular movements above those already generated by houses within the locality. On this basis, there would be no adverse highway impacts from the proposed development.

A cycle store (for two bicycles) is proposed to be located in the front garden of the development. The provision of safe and secure cycle storage is welcomed and contributes to the aim both locally and nationally of reducing the reliance on the private vehicle. the location of the proposed cycle store has been addressed earlier in the report.

Other Matters

Concerns have been raised regarding the impacts of noise from the proposed dwelling, the size of the plot and, therefore, the resulting size of the proposed dwelling and the loss of open views from surrounding properties. Each of these points will be considered in turn.

Firstly, the proposed area is residential in character and it is not considered that an introduction of an additional modest dwelling would be likely to generate a significant amount of noise above that currently experienced.

The width of the plot and the size of the proposed dwelling appear generally comparable to others in Farrah Road. It is, however, acknowledged that the length of the plot (from front to back) is significantly smaller than others in the area and this has been previously addressed.

Lastly concerns have been raised about the loss of open views that currently exist from properties. The loss of views is not, however, a planning consideration.

Conclusion

The site is non previously developed land within the urban area and is therefore considered contrary to the aims of saved policy H1. This policy constraint, however, needs to be balanced with the fact that there is a current need for housing in Thanet, and on this basis the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that applications for housing should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The site is considered sustainable in its location. On balance the need for housing in sustainable locations such as this site outweighs the need set out in saved Policy H1 of protecting non-previously developed land.

Whilst the site could accommodate the proposed building itself without affecting the character and appearance of the street scene, it is noted that the length of the site is out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area with their more generous plots resulting in a cramped and over intensive form of development. The provision of private amenity space to the front of the dwelling surrounding by 2m high close boarded fencing would be out of keeping with the low boundary treatments to other front gardens within Farrar Road. This feature represents the contrived nature of the proposed development for a plot which is not large enough to accommodate a dwelling to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. The overall development would, therefore, result in significant harm from this development to the street scene and wider character of the area,

It is therefore recommended that members refuse the application.

Case Officer

Annabel Hemmings

TITLE:

F/TH/17/0139

Project

Land Rear Of 10 Cornford Road BIRCHINGTON Kent

Scale:

