

MADDOX PLANNING

LONDON & MANCHESTER

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09.02.22

**Garages and land to the rear of Osney Way Lower Higham Road, Gravesend.
Response to neighbour comments on Full planning application ref: 20211415.**

Dear Peter,

Please find below responses to the neighbour objections that have been raised regarding planning application reference: 20211415 at the above site. This relates to the demolition of the 14 existing lock-up garages and the erection of 4no. three storey terraced houses, with associated parking, gardens, access, refuse, bike storage and boundary treatment. The issues raised have been fully and carefully considered in the design of the proposals, and we are keen to engage with neighbours and address their concerns as set out in our Statement of Community Involvement included in the Design and Access Statement. The development will create some impact, but this impact will not be unacceptable based on adopted guidelines set out in planning policy and has been carefully mitigated through design. There is also a significant need for housing in the area, including larger family units, whereby the presumption in favour of sustainable development must be applied in line with the NPPF.

Whilst the Applicant acknowledges the concerns raised by residents, the proposals will fundamentally help to meet housing requirements, with the principle of residential use having been established by way of the previous planning permission at the site. Meanwhile the proposal is in keeping with the local area in terms of the overall form of existing properties, with the proposed housing and associated facilities adhering to key planning policy requirements, ensuring optimum use of an underutilised brownfield site. The proposals will also significantly enhance the existing outlook of the site, which currently attracts anti-social behaviour, and has been carefully designed to adhere to design standards set out in the Council's Local Plan and supporting SPG guidance, to ultimately ensure that impacts on neighbouring amenity are sufficiently mitigated.

Resident One – comment one:

'Hello, no doubt this objection will end up like the last one, not to be read and left me with no reply but ended up granting planning permission anyway! Seems Gravesham are just glad to see four lots of council tax

coming their way but I will try again!! Once again the company have made an error in the daylight assessment and put the wrong addresses down for the houses they are showing! My house is shown as number 3 Osney way when I am actually number 1.'

Applicant response:

The Applicant has updated the originally submitted daylight and sunlight report, to correctly reference 1 Osney Road which can be viewed on the online planning register. Nevertheless, the results are the same, which show that no unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight will be experienced by Number 1 Osney Way, or any of the other neighbouring properties.

Resident One – Comment two:

'They also show my downstairs bedroom as a NON-HABITABLE ROOM when it is NOT! The ridiculously sized building will now overlook my windows even more than the previous application leading to even less privacy!

Applicant response:

The applicant has updated the originally submitted ground floor to revise the annotation and correctly identify the ground floor bedroom. Nevertheless, due to its location this bedroom is not overlooked by the proposal. The proposal has been carefully designed to ensure that there is no unacceptable overlooking, and the privacy of neighbours is protected. The proposal complies with the SPG2 requirements which are explained on page 53 of the Design and Access Statement. There is no overlooking of the ground floor rooms of 1 Osney Way from the proposal.

Resident One – Comment three:

'I can see they had tried to angle the corner of the building away, but it is not enough, window 4 shown in the diagrams is NOT a bathroom it is a bedroom! The erection of this vast 3 storey building in such close proximity to neighbouring houses is clearly overshadowing which is resulting in a loss of privacy for myself by looking directly into my bedroom windows!'

Applicant response:

As noted above, the plan has been corrected in the most recent revision. Nevertheless, the height and distance of the proposal in relation to its neighbours is compliant with policy and therefore acceptable, and this is set out on pages 52 and 54 of the Design and Access Statement. As demonstrated in the supporting submission documents, including the daylight and sunlight report, the proposal causes no unacceptable overshadowing or loss of privacy from neighbouring dwellings, and the proposal does not directly look into any neighbouring bedroom windows.

Resident One – Comment four:

'Not only that but it is absolutely ridiculous to have 3 x three-bedroom houses and 1 x Two-bedroom house on such a small plot, the building is not in keeping with the rest of the area and parking for the 15+ extra residents it is apparently going to house will be chaos in such a busy area!'

Applicant response:

The proposal makes optimum use of a brownfield piece of land, which is supported by national, regional, and local planning policy. The houses are larger than national space standard requirements, and the ample

gardens and parking area meet local SPG2 policy requirements, meaning that the development is not cramped. The buildings have been developed from a careful reading of the design of the local area, and it is considered to be in keeping with the form, massing, detailing and materials of the surrounding area and as established by the previous planning permission. Parking has been carefully considered, as set out in the Transport Statement, to ensure there is no unacceptable impact on the area, including a parking stress survey having been carried out to support the application.

Resident One – Comment five:

'The previous application that was granted should not have been and now this one is even more ridiculous, we can only hope the officer in charge has more sense and asks for the size to be reduced. It's just greed from the developers and sod the neighbours!!!'

Applicant response:

The previous consent was on a smaller site area, and the current proposal is for a notably larger site boundary. Nevertheless, the existing consent established the principles that the current proposal also adheres to. The current proposal provides much needed family housing and has been carefully developed to not cause unacceptable harm to any neighbouring property as illustrated within the supporting Design and Access statement.

Resident Two – comment one:

'I strongly oppose this application. The erection of 4, three storey terraced houses would not blend in with the current established housing structures within the local vicinity.'

Applicant response:

It is noted that the proposal is of a form common to the area – terraced houses on a cul de sac. The proposal is lower than its surrounding context, notably the houses on Pirrip Close and the Parish Hall, and there are many three storey homes nearby including number 2, 8 and 18 Osney Way, as well as residential buildings of three stories at 75a Lower Higham Road and Vicarage Court. As such, the proposals are considered to complement the form of existing buildings in the vicinity in accordance with the NPPF Paragraph 130 and Core Strategy Policy CS20.

Resident Two – Comment two:

'I also strongly oppose this application as the erection of the said properties would directly affect the views and severely restrict the natural light into the gardens and properties in Pirrip Close.'

Applicant response:

The proposal has been carefully designed to preserve views from the homes on Pirrip Close by being set back from them. The development complies with the 25-degree rule from SPG2 meaning that the development is far enough away from these homes to comply with policy, and the daylight and sunlight report concludes that the development causes no unacceptable loss of natural light in the gardens or properties of Pirrip Close, or any other neighbour.

Resident Two – Comment three:

'Namely, House numbers 1, 3, 5 & 8. It would also give a sense of enclosure and reduce the privacy of the gardens and bedrooms to the said properties in Pirrip Close.'

Applicant response:

The proposal is a significant distance away from the homes on Pirrip Close and is lower than these houses, which meets the distances and 25 degree rule set out in SPG2. The massing of the proposal complies with policy and has been carefully designed to be as spacious as possible. Finally, there are no windows looking toward the houses on Pirrip Close and 1.8m fences at ground level are proposed, meaning that the proposal will not create an unacceptable loss of privacy to these houses, or any other neighbouring property.

Resident Three– comment one:

'To cram that many houses, garages etc. into such a small space is unacceptable.'

Applicant response:

The proposal is spacious and includes generous gardens that meet SPG2 policy requirements as well as a large parking area meaning that the proposal is not cramped. The current proposal is on a notably larger site than the previously consented proposal.

Resident Three– Comment two:

'Consideration must be given to the existing residents and local businesses as I understand a number of places will be taken from the car park and more importantly, they will take away a certain amount of privacy of existing homes.'

Applicant response:

Parking will not be taken from existing residents or businesses. A parking stress survey and transport strategy have also been submitted as part of the application, supporting this. The proposal does not overlook any bedrooms, living spaces, or gardens to an unacceptable degree, and this is supported in policy terms as set out in the Design and Access Statement. Moreover, early engagement with neighbours, and consideration of their needs was used to develop the designs as set out in the DAS and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Resident Three– Comment three:

'I realise that at the end of the day it will happen because finance always wins but please take these points into consideration.'

Applicant response:

There is a significant need for housing of all kinds in the area, with the principle of development established as being acceptable at pre-application stage and by way of the previous planning permission at the site. The proposals have been carefully designed to negate impacts on neighbouring amenity with the design taking cues from existing buildings in the surrounding area which will be a significant enhancement to the existing outlook of the site, whilst reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviour which the site currently attracts. As such, the proposals are considered to create tangible benefits for the local area which should be given significant weight in considering the proposals, and balanced alongside resident comments

Resident Four – comment one:

'The building of 3 storey properties would not fit in with the rest of the housing in the area and would impede on my privacy overlooking into my garden and reduce natural light into the house and garden.'

Applicant response:

The proposal is lower than the houses on Pirrip Close and the Parish Hall, and many houses in the area are also three stories tall, notably number 2, 8 and 18 Osney Way, as well as the flats at 75a Lower Higham Road and Vicarage Court. The Design and Access Statement explains how the scheme has been carefully designed based on a thorough analysis of the context. Because of this, Design South East agreed with the orientation and siting of the proposal in their pre-application feedback. The Design and Access Statement and Daylight and Sunlight report explain how the proposal accords with all relevant policy, and causes no unacceptable loss of natural light to any neighbouring gardens or homes. Similarly the Design and Access Statement explains how the proposal does not create an unacceptable loss of privacy for homes or gardens neighbouring the site, since it complies with SPG2.

Resident Five – comment one:

'This development is against the keeping of the local area and immediate surroundings.'

Applicant response:

The Design and Access Statement shows how the scheme has been carefully designed based on a thorough analysis of the context which is also summarised within the supporting planning statement.

Resident Five – Comment two:

'The proposed buildings of a three-storey will be one storey above all the existing properties.'

Applicant response:

The drawings show that the proposal is lower than the houses on Pirrip Close and the Parish Hall. Many houses in the area are also three stories tall, notably number 2, 8 and 18 Osney Way, as well as the flats at 75a Lower Higham Road and Vicarage Court. As such, the proposals are considered to be in keeping with the form of existing properties in line with Core Strategy Policy CS20.

Resident Five – Comment three:

'Secondly, this will intrude on the privacy of the surrounding properties, not just by height by placement of windows but the location of the proposed builds by directly overlooking back gardens of a number of existing properties of the Brambles, 1, 3, 5 and 7 Osney Way and those properties on Pirrip Close behind Osney Way, which would border the proposed development.'

Applicant response:

The proposal creates no unacceptable overlooking, and the Design and Access Statement explains how the proposal meets planning policy requirements as set out in SPG2, with regards to separation distances and

ensuring that impacts on neighbouring amenity are mitigated, particularly on pages 52 to 54 of the Design and Access Statement.

Resident Five – Comment four:

Thirdly, there is insufficient room for this proposed development itself for 4 properties and all assorted assurances of parking, gardens, access, refuse and bike storage, and boundary treatments.

Applicant response:

The proposal is spacious, and bespoke to its site which has been carefully designed to ensure that the houses and ancillary facilities can comfortably be accommodated on site. This is shown on the submitted Ground Floor Plan. There is plenty of space for compliant units which are significantly larger than minimum national space standards requirements, as well as generous gardens which meet local SPD requirements, and ample parking, access, refuse, bike storage and boundary treatments, all of which are set out in the Design and Access Statement and meet policy requirements.

Resident Five – Comment five:

'Four, it is presented as refuse and bike storage will be separate to the actual houses, which is both outside of the characteristics of the existing housing on Osney Way and Pirrip Close. This has the potential to create a hazard of excess refuse storage in an area (and not within the houses themselves, their own back gardens for bins and bike storage), which would cause rodent infestation, increased possible unwanted tipping and excess Council involvement to monitor and control the anti-social element of this part of the proposed development.'

Applicant response:

The houses have integrated, enclosed bin stores at the front of each property, while secure lockable bike stores, recommended by the Secured by Design Officer, are provided in each garden meeting policy requirements. Management for the regular collection of waste is included within the submitted Transport Statement, with the bin stores being enclosed to negate any unwanted tipping. This proposed approach is common to many other contemporary proposals and is the same as what was consented for the previous scheme on the site. GBC environmental health officers have also stated they were satisfied with the proposals in their consultation reply on the 16/12/21.

Resident Five – Comment six:

'Fifth, it has been seen by a cursory internet search that the proposed builders/developers have established a pattern of anti-social building hours (weekends, Sundays and Bank holidays), that many of their buildings have been done to a dangerous and unsafe standard with many works incomplete and not taken into hand properly.'

Applicant response:

Working hours will be secured by condition and adhered to as part of the development, while the construction will comply with CDM health and safety laws and Building Control standards. The proposal is for a high-quality development, and the design team and applicant have met local residents to hear concerns and alter the proposals as set out in the Statement of Community Involvement in the Design and Access Statement.

Resident Five – Comment seven:

'Sixth, it will significantly impact the parking on particularly Osney Way as it will block during construction access to the Parish Hall and its parking, meaning that it will create an unsafe environment for access to the Hall, with the strong possibility of dangerous parking.'

Applicant response:

The proposal will not block parking on Osney Way during construction. As set out in the Construction Traffic Management Plan supplied with the application, these vehicle movements will be minimised and carefully controlled. Access to the parish hall and the public parking will be maintained throughout construction. The Applicant is also happy for this to be controlled by way of planning condition.

Resident Five – Comment eight:

'This proposal is against the very character of Osney Way (a cul de sac) and Pirrip Close (a close).'

Applicant response:

The proposal is of the same character as its surroundings, since it is itself a cul de sac, which is presented as a mews. This site layout was confirmed as being acceptable by Design South East at the pre-application stage.

Resident Five – Comment nine:

'The cramming together of 4 houses with insufficient resources will create substandard housing provision if this proposal is accepted by Gravesham Council.'

Applicant response:

As mentioned before, the site is spacious and the units, gardens and parking are substantial and compliant. The homes themselves exceed national space standards, and will be built to modern standards of insulation in order to conserve energy, highlighting the above standard quality of the scheme.

Resident Five – Comment ten:

'We therefore strongly object to this proposed development for the reasons as stated above. We do not wish to limit development in this area, however, this proposal is against all the reasons that we bought in this area, along with others in Osney Way who have lived here for sometimes decades. This proposal is not appropriate for this area and we would be grateful if the above could be considered in your decision. Many thanks for your time and consideration in this matter.'

Applicant response:

New housing is desperately needed in the area, and this site is currently an anti-social behaviour blackspot in the community. The proposal will clean this up and create quality homes that help alleviate the housing crisis, that will be knitted into the fabric of Chalk therefore complementing the existing form and character of the area.

Summary

In conclusion, the development proposals ultimately provide much needed family housing, which is specifically identified as being required by way of the most recent SHMA and Housing Monitoring Report. The presumption in favour of sustainable development must also be applied, in acknowledging that the Council have undelivered

on their housing targets for the past three years and are unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing. In line with the justification set out in this statement, there is no overriding reason as to why planning permission should not be granted – in line with the NPPF Paragraph 11(d) 124 tests. Other key benefits are summarised below, which should be afforded significant weight alongside the presumption in favour of sustainable development:

- Delivery of high-quality homes on an underutilised, brownfield site which will significantly enhance the existing outlook of the site to the benefit of the local area – in line with the priorities of the NPPF and Core Strategy policies.
- Provision of housing which is in keeping with the form and urban character of the area, whilst creating a sense of identity and retaining Gravesham's historic legacy through the design detailing.
- Making optimum use of previously developed land (which is not subject to any heritage or other technical sensitivities) in a Borough where suitable and available sites are scarce (as evidenced by the emerging Local Plan) – supporting the fundamental objective of the NPPF Paragraph 125 and recent Government incentives to increase the supply of homes at brownfield sites as a priority.

Yours sincerely



Lucy Howes
Associate Director

cc. Hugh McEwen – Office S&M Architects
