

110 Southleigh Road Proposed Extension

Key Areas of Objection:

Scale & proportion in relation to other nearby residences

The current property is roughly the same size and style as the surrounding properties. The plans would approximately double its size, resulting in a structure greatly out of proportion with all the surrounding properties. The resultant scale, design and size would be wholly inappropriate to the context and character of its surroundings, and in relation to the size of its plot. It would be a 'monster', an eyesore and an extension way beyond reasonably acceptable limits.

Referring to the HBC Borough Design Guide, Section 5.35 states:

In general, an extension should not be bigger than the main building and therefore should appear smaller in mass and height. Extensions should look to the existing building as the main reference point for appearance, materials and details such ridge, verge and eave finishes, head and cills, brick coursing, dressings and quoin work.

The proposed extension breaches these guidelines in most respects-

- (i) it is at least as big as the existing building (especially as the house has been extended previously- the conservatory and to the rear of the building / connecting corridor to the garage). The new pitched roof for the main building and the new garage are approximately 3 times the surface area of the existing pitched roof.
- (ii) From the main front (south) elevation the new structure will appear vastly larger in mass and height.
- (iii) The extension bears no relation or reference to the existing building regarding appearance, materials and details etc- the application (Section 5) states that the construction will be 'Sand and cement render to match existing'. This is incorrect - the existing property is all brick, as are most of the surrounding properties. This is miss-representation. A sand and cement rendered construction would make the new structure appear visually even larger and more dominant, clashing with its surroundings.

The proposals would be classed as both a front and a side extension, as it is to the right and in front of the front door and entrance to the property (south elevation on the submitted plans). HBC Borough Design Guide states:

Side Extensions

5.37 It is important that the extension remains subservient to the main building, so it can be read which part of the building is the original and which is a later addition.

It is clear from the submitted plans that the reverse would be true, i.e. the extension would dominate the existing building. It would be far from obvious which was the original structure.

Further from Section 5.37:

Two storey side extensions should be set back behind the main building line. The ridge height of the extension can also be reduced to below the height of the main ridge so that the extension does not dominate the main frontage. The angle of the roof should be the same as or similar to the existing roof.

- (i) The residential part of the extension is parallel to, not set back from the main building line.
- (ii) The ridge height on the plans is only very slightly below the height of the main ridge. This might technically be within the guidelines but not in the spirit of them.
- (iii) The new roofline is at a flatter angle than the existing roofline.
- (iv) Most importantly, the new roofline is at 90 degrees to the existing roofline so presents an entirely new, dominating mass of roofline, completely contrary to the existing. The new roofline is of far greater surface area (circa 3x) than the existing roofline.
- (v) The new garage is well beyond the main building line (the existing garage is set well back from the existing building line).

Regarding Front Extensions:

5.36 Front extensions should not protrude too far forward from the main building, or be prominent in the street and should respect the common building line. Front extensions are therefore most appropriate where the building is set well back from the street, where there is a staggered building line, or in isolated countryside locations. Two storey front extensions will only be acceptable where the building is set well back from the street.

- (i) The new garage protrudes entirely from the main building, way beyond the building line.
- (ii) The 'street' is the shared private drive which the property leads off and fronts on to. It would clearly be very prominent.
- (iii) The new garage would be almost adjacent to the 'street' boundary fence.

In Section 5.38 regarding gaps between buildings;

It is important that gaps are retained between buildings. This helps form the pattern of development in an area, which in turn influences local character. Therefore, side extensions which have a negative effect on the gap between buildings should be resisted. This is particularly important for two storey extensions, which can also cause adverse effects on neighbouring properties, such as overshadowing.

(i) The proposed extension is out of step with the pattern of development in the area.

(ii) There is severe overshadowing, especially to 112 Southleigh Road and most especially to 5 and 6 Spindle Warren.

If HBC Planning class this as a rear extension (from the perspective of Southleigh Road), then the proposal is contrary to most of those guidelines too, in particular:

...sympathetic and subservient to the original design of the building. They also need to have particular regard to neighbouring properties and should not cause an adverse affect, such as overshadowing. Rear extensions should maintain a distance of 8 metres plus from the extension and rear boundary wall and 20 metres from the extension and the neighbouring property to the rear...

And:

5.42 Rear extensions should be a maximum of 3 metres from the rear wall of the existing house, providing that this does not have an adverse effect on neighbouring properties.

Privacy / overlooking / natural light

We consider that the proposal would considerably reduce our privacy due to the multiple additional upstairs windows. Of particular concern are the 3 proposed skylight windows in the new front (south) roofline. Referring to the Borough Design Guide, Section 5.50:

As discussed above these may not be acceptable in all instances. Rooflights on the roof fronting a street should be avoided, these should be located to the rear. New dormers, rooflights and windows should not have an adversely negative effect on the privacy of neighbours

(i) per my above comments I assume the 'street' to be the common shared access to the property, onto which the front (south) of the property faces. Hence the 3 proposed skylights fall foul of these terms.

(ii) The new proposed rooflights would have an adversely negative effect on our privacy hence we would ask for them to be deleted, unless they are well above head height in the property and are non-opening.

Parking

The application (Section 8) states that there will be no effect on existing car parking arrangements. This is plainly untrue. Access to the property is off a short, narrow (one vehicle width) private driveway, which is shared access to the other 4 properties on the 5 property plot. Parking is already an issue, i.e. the applicant's household already has more vehicles than can be accommodated on the property (usually circa 5-6). It is notable that since the submission of the application the number of vehicles on the property has reduced, with vehicles temporarily re-located to side streets / layby. Photographic evidence of 5-6 parked cars on the property and relocated vehicles in the surrounding area can be provided on request. There is no parking provision or space immediately surrounding the property. There is usually no space for the applicant's visitors' cars, which are frequently parked outside the house on the shared narrow access, sometimes blocking access for the other 4 residences.

Specifically, referring to HBC Parking Supplementary Planning Document (January 2016);

Section 1.11: If a planning application for extension/alterations (residential and non residential) involves a significant increase in area then the impact of the development on parking will be a material consideration and additional parking spaces may be sought to ensure that a suitable level of parking provision is made.

The proposed extension *reduces* the number of parking spaces by 2-3 cars whilst adding greatly to the accommodation (3-4 bedroom increase).

Per Table 4a- C3 Dwelling Houses, vehicle parking, the guide ratio of bedrooms to parking spaces is the number of bedrooms minus 1. Hence if the proposed extension results in a (minimum of) 7 bedrooms, the parking provision would need to be 6 spaces. This is the absolute maximum parking capacity on the property currently. If extended, the demolition of the existing garage and building of a new garage on the existing car parking area will clearly reduce the parking capacity by 3 cars (because the footprint of the new double garage will take up the land area of 3 parked cars). Reference for this from the above referenced planning document:

Residential Car Parking Space Size and Arrangement Section 4.06: An individual car parking space should measure a minimum 2.4m in width by 4.8m in length. Space should also be provided for car doors to be opened and car boots to be accessed or garage doors to be opened. These should be regarded as minimum lengths as cars continue to increase in size.

With 5-6 parked cars on the property, there is no space for turning, even currently, and obviously not post-extension. This falls foul of the following section of the above document:

4.07 In addition, sufficient space for turning facilities on site to allow vehicles to enter and leave in a forward gear (see Figure 1) will be encouraged. Where vehicles reversing from or onto the highway would give rise to highway safety issues, on-site turning space will be compulsory.

Finally, as cars, existing and potentially future additions, clearly cannot be accommodated on the extended property:

4.29 It will not necessarily be appropriate to lower parking standards simply because there is capacity for parking on the immediate road network. This approach can individually or cumulatively alter and detrimentally affect the character and visual amenity of an area and may be considered unacceptable

Future intentions

The applicant and his wife are owners (Listed Directors) of a healthcare / care home related business. The proposed structure has the look and feel of a nursing home / care home. Already a certain amount of business seems to be conducted at the property - much coming and going of vehicles during the working week- hence we would raise the question / possibility that the applicant intends the vastly extended property to be used as a care home facility, and / or with more business being conducted from the property? We would therefore request that a limitation is put in place to prevent future change of use to a house of multiple occupation (HMO) or other use such as care home / rest home etc.

Disruption during building

As stated above, there is limited parking space on the property, which is always too small for the number of vehicles owned by the household. There is *no* additional space for vehicles on the shared access road without blocking entry and egress for the other residents. The private driveway opens out onto a busy residential road (Southleigh Road), with a bus stop immediately next to the applicant's property, hence parking anywhere nearby for construction vehicles is impractical, conflicts with public service buses and would be a danger to road users and pedestrians.

The vast nature of the proposed rebuild would require a great deal of construction plant, machinery and vehicles, over a considerable period of time, which it is simply impractical to accommodate in the tight confines of the plot and its surroundings. A construction of this magnitude would create immense inconvenience and disruption to the lives of the surrounding property owners, and access to their properties would be compromised due to potential consistent blocking of the main private driveway.

Affect on surrounding property values

The resulting building would be a dominating structure, overlooking, blocking natural light and invading the privacy of 4 residences within the adjacent group of 5 properties, plus at least 2 other dwellings nearby, all of which are not currently overlooked in any significant way. This, plus other factors such as parking, noise, coming and going of a substantial number of occupants and visitors etc., is certain to have a negative effect on the resale value and saleability of the surrounding properties.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposal represents overdevelopment of a restricted plot resulting in adverse effects on neighbours' amenity, access to their homes, inadequate car parking and loss of character. It demonstrably falls foul of, and is contrary to, many of the Borough's planning guidelines, as referenced above. Hence we respectfully request that the planning application be refused for all the above reasons.