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Our ref	MS/HXC/00262917/1
Your ref	
Date	20 October 2022
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Dear Mr Osmond

18 Crowsport, Hamble-le-Rice, Southampton, SO31 4HG – application no. F/22/93841

Please accept this letter as a strong objection to the above application.

We act for the owner of no. 22 Crowsport, which is a close neighbour to the application site.

Crowsport comprises a small, pre-war, estate comprising a mixture of single storey and two-storey buildings of a uniform, art deco style.

Whilst the application proposals seek to echo some of the well-establish design principles of the estate, the proposals clearly amount to overdevelopment of the plot. As a result, the proposals comprise a cramped form of development that will harm the character and appearance of the Hamble Conservation Area, as well as creating a poor living environment for the residents of the proposed house and harm neighbouring residential amenities.

The application is not supported by a heritage statement, which underlines the failure of the applicant to understand requirements in this regard and also the harm that the proposed development will create to the immediate area. The design of the proposed dwelling is inappropriate, not least due to the provision of a first-floor extension to include a projecting element that will create a prominent feature to the streetscene, which will introduce an alien feature harming the character and appearance of the conservation area.

These points are set out in more detail below:

Overdevelopment of the plot

The application site comprises a small but prominent corner plot containing a relatively small single storey building. Its plot area is some 500sq-m and by way of comparison its neighbour, no 20 (which is another relatively small plot) is 550sq-m. The application plot is one of the smallest plots on the estate.

As such, careful consideration should clearly be taken with regard to any proposals that increases the footprint, scale and massing over and above that currently on-site.

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The development proposals seek to significantly increase the footprint of built form within the plot. This will amount to overdevelopment of the site causing harm to the immediate area and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The existing footprint (to include the garage) is some 185sq-m. On the basis of a plot size of 500sq-m this amounts to some 36% of the site. However, the proposed footprint, to include, the first-floor projection is some 253sq-m, or just over 50%. In addition, there are considerable areas of the remaining plot that are given over to hardsurfacing, for example, to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the building. As a result, there is little opportunity to provide a decent garden for the proposed house.

This clearly creates a cramped form of development creating an unduly dominant building with resultant harm to the character of the conservation area.

One consequence of the layout of the scheme is that bedrooms 1-3 are required to provide their only windows on the southern portion of the proposed dwelling. Given the close proximity of these windows to the common boundary with no. 19 Crowsport (to its immediate south) it is clear that these windows will have a poor outlook and create a poor living environment for the residents of the proposed dwelling. Whilst the existing floorplans show one existing south facing bedroom the proposed dwelling provides for three bedrooms creating additional issues that currently exist.

Further evidence of this overdevelopment is that the application is forced to use a first-floor terrace as the primary amenity area of the dwelling. The presence of first floor living accommodation, rather than for bedrooms, points to the desire use the upper floor and terrace for the majority of the day.

This terrace is in excess of 110sq-m and significantly larger, for example, than a typical balcony. As such, there is potential nuisance for noise, which as part of an elevated area can be more problematic, particularly when relatively large gatherings take place. There is also the potential for overlooking to immediate neighbours from the terrace. The size and location of the terrace is therefore likely to result in unacceptable nuisance to immediate neighbours. This potential nuisance is likely to be exacerbated by the re-orientation of the building (in addition to the provision of first floor living accommodation already referred to) that provides an emphasis on habitable rooms in the form of kitchen and living accommodation and associated windows and bi-fold doors on the southern and western elevations.

Impact on the Hamble-le- Rice conservation area

The site is located within the Hamble-le-Rice conservation area. There is therefore a duty under S72(1) of the Listing Building Act 1990 for any such development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that conservation area.

As such, reference is drawn to para 194 of the National Policy Planning Framework (July 2021), which requires that applicants should *describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.*

There is no apparent heritage statement submitted with the application and no reference drawn to para 194 of the NPPF or the assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the conservation area in the submitted Design and Access Statement. The inevitable conclusion that is drawn from this is that the applicant has failed to take account of fact that the proposals are located in a conservation area and that no assessment has been made in respect of potential harm that can be created to that area.

The recently adopted Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (2016-2036) (adopted April 2022) recognises the importance of the protection of heritage assets primarily through policies S8 and DM12. Relevant extracts of those policies are produced below with particular points highlighted in hold:

Strategic policy S8, Historic Environment

1. The Borough Council will continue to conserve and/or enhance the Boroughs heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. This includes all heritage assets including listed buildings and structures, Conservation Areas as designated on the policies map, landscapes and archaeology.

This will be through the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and other strategies and in the determination of planning applications for new development (see policy DM12). This will involve:

c. restricting development likely to harm them or their settings through management of development proposals; and

d. encouraging development that enhances them, ensures their long-term management and maintenance and where possible, enables public enjoyment and the interpretation of the asset.

Policy DM12, Heritage Assets

1. Development of a heritage asset or within its setting will be permitted provided it does not harm or detract from the significance or special interest of the asset, and sustains and enhances its special character and qualities. The more important the asset, the greater the weight that should be accorded to this criterion. Permission for development which results in substantial harm to, or loss of, designated assets of the highest significance will be wholly exceptional. Development which involves the demolition or destruction of any part of other heritage assets will not be permitted unless its removal or replacement would enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset. In these circumstances, the developer will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost, in a manner appropriate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence publicly accessible.

b. It achieves a high standard of design which respects and complements the character and qualities of the heritage asset(s);

The Hamble Conservation Area Character Appraisal (appendix A) pays particular reference to the Crowsport estate and notes that no 18 Crowsport is one of the original dwellings on the estate, thus underlining the need to take care in the consideration of any applications on-site.

Appendix A notes that there have been a number of inappropriate additions, including those at first floor level that *has meant that some of the purity and simplicity associated with the Art Deco style has been eroded and lost.*

Whilst it is noted that a number of local dwellings are two-stories in height, it is noted that in the part of Crowsport that there are a number of single storey dwellings to include nos. 11, 12, 19 and 20 Crowsport. The character of this part of Crowsport is therefore one of single storey buildings and, as noted from the conservation area appraisal, the provision of first floor additions erodes the character of the estate. Given the local cluster of single storey buildings it is argued that to allow the first-floor addition will therefore unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The following photographs shows the context of the proposed dwellings within the midst of single storey buildings:

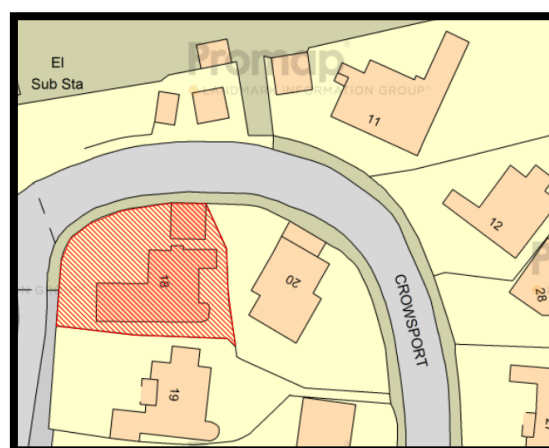




Photo 1 – 12 Crowsport



Photo 2 – 11 Crowsport



Photo 3 – 20 Crowsport



Photo 4 – 19 Crowsport

Page 12 of the character area appraisal provides specific guidance for Crowsport – which sets out a requirement to preserve the unique style of the estate and to include the following:

- i. roof forms that are flat with parapets*
- ii. walls that are of white render*
- iii. Windows that are of a simple rectangular form without glazing bars*
- iv. First floor extensions that do not exceed 50% of the area of the groundfloor.*

The proposals, by incorporating 1.7m high walls and glazing screens go way beyond the normal definition of a parapet wall. This is clearly contrary to the requirements of the conservation area appraisal and should be resisted. The presence of such high walls will exacerbate the dominance of the building to the local streetscene and further harm the conservation area. Furthermore, it will give the impression of a two-storey building and thus be in contravention of the requirement to only allow first floor extensions of some 50% of the ground floor.

Harm is further created by the inclusion of a first-floor projection on the northern elevation of the dwelling – that overhangs the front of the proposed dwelling by at least 2m. This will create a dominant and intrusive feature to the local streetscene. There are no other local examples of such a feature. The proposals therefore seek to introduce an alien feature to the estate, which is completely unacceptable not least given the uniform and precise design parameters that define the remainder of the dwellings on the estate.

The proposals therefore fail to respond to the requirements of both national policy requirements (in the form of the NPPF) and local policy advice as set out in policies S8 and DM12. The proposals specifically harm the setting of the conservation area (S8) and fail to provide a high standard of design (DM12) and should be resisted.

We trust that the above comments are help in your consideration of the above application and that you will refuse the application.

Yours sincerely

Mark Sennitt
Principal Planning Consultant
For and on behalf of Paris Smith LLP