

MC/13/1894

Date Received: 1 August, 2013

Location: 7 Maple Road, Strood, Rochester, ME2 2HZ

Proposal: Retrospective application for construction of an outbuilding to rear

Applicant: Mr J Saunders

Agent: Mr J Burbury 8 Copperfield Close Chalk Gravesend Kent DA12 2NJ

Ward Strood South

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 12 March 2014.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

- 1 Within six months of the date of this decision, the external surface of the outbuilding shall be completed in a smooth render finish by a suitably qualified contractor and once completed shall be thereafter maintained.

To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and without prejudice to conditions of visual amenity in the locality, in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003

- 2 The outbuilding hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of 7 and/or 9 Maple Road and shall not be let or sold as a separate hereditament or used in conjunction with a business.

Reason: To regulate and control the permitted development in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003

For the reasons for this recommendation for Approval please see planning appraisal section and conclusion at the end of this report

Proposal

This is a retrospective application for the construction of an outbuilding to the rear.

The building is irregular in footprint shape and is single storey in height of a flat roof design that follows the alignment of the site boundaries but is inset off each boundary to allow access for maintenance of flank walls and guttering. Part of the

building includes a toilet and a shower (incomplete) but overall it is currently used for domestic storage. The building is poorly finished in render (in part) which is also incomplete. The building is within the rear garden of an upper floor flat known as 7 Maple road but access through a fence is provided to the rear garden of No 9 Maple road. Both properties are owned by the applicants.

Representations

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour notifications to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Five representations (from four different households) have been received objecting to the proposal on the following grounds:

- The design is not of a high quality or in keeping with surrounding built form
- Loss of outlook from neighbouring properties and overlooking of neighbouring sites
- Concern has been raised in terms of the intended use of the building

All other matters raised are non-material considerations

Following a review of the submitted plans, it was noted that there were inaccuracies in the layout. Amended plans were sought and a request made to complete the scheme in a simple smooth render or pebble dash finish. This was agreed by the applicants and neighbours were notified of this and the amended plans.

Development Plan Policies

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003. The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Background

7 Maple Road has been subdivided as a flat since 1996 when the first floor flat was registered with revenues and benefits as a separate unit. Due to this time scale, the conversion would be immune from enforcement action. The applicants own this upper floor flat and the adjoining house at no 9. They live at no 9 utilising the outbuilding for storage and access to the building is also available for the flat through the rear garden of no 7. The rear garden for the flat forms half of the original house garden which has been divided into two to serve both flats.

Design

Garden sizes within the vicinity are relatively generous for the area and the building is set towards the extreme rear of the garden adjacent to others. Two metre high

boundary treatment and planting in places does help screen the building to a degree but the development remains visible from neighbouring gardens. No objection is raised to the scale of the building due to height and siting but as the development is visible from neighbouring gardens (mainly due to low level boundary treatment), the impact is made worse by the external finish of the building which is very poor and finished in places with a rough render approach. This is in conflict with the finish on the surrounding built form but could be addressed via a condition requiring it to be a smooth render..

The garden is split into two smaller amenity spaces but there is still sufficient garden area provided for the occupiers of the flat, albeit smaller than the gardens for the surrounding family houses. As such the development carried out is not considered to be excessive. The works carried out therefore accord with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Neighbour Amenities

Due to siting, there would not be a detrimental impact on neighbours in terms of daylight, sunlight and outlook. The siting would prevent there being a significant detrimental impact in terms of privacy in particular by the nature of the use as an outbuilding for domestic use only.

The size of the outbuilding and some of the facilities that have already been provided necessitate a condition to be imposed that ensures that the building is not used as a separate unit and nor is it used in conjunction with a business. The reason for imposing this condition is so that neighbouring amenities are not adversely affected.

Subject to the recommended condition, the development will not result in a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenities and as such accords with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Local Finance Considerations

None relevant to this application.

Conclusion and Reasons for Approval

The outbuilding is acceptable in design and amenity terms subject to the recommended conditions and accordingly complies with the relevant policies set out in the Development Plan.

The application would normally be dealt with under officer delegated powers but due to the number of representations that have been received expressing views contrary to the recommendation, the application is reported to members for determination.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://planning.medway.gov.uk/dconline/AcolNetCGI.gov>