



Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath (KDBH)

Neighbourhood Forum

Response to Planning Application Planning Application: PL/2020/02541/PPOL

65 Knowle Wood Road, Dorridge

Outline application for access and layout (appearance, landscaping and scale to be reserved) for the demolition of existing dwelling, building ancillary to dwelling & garage and the erection of 3 No. 5 bedroom houses, garaging and associated parking.

FAO: Laura Taylor, Case Officer

The Knowle Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Forum notes that this application is in outline for 3 dwellings, but seeks detailed approval of the access and layout.

The Neighbourhood Forum objects to the proposed development for the following reasons:

1. The Design and Access Statement is more about planning than design and access. It provides no information with regard to the design of the dwellings and inadequate details on access to be able to approve the matter in detail.
2. As regards the principle of 3 houses here, the applicant has again failed to recognise that the KDBH Neighbourhood Plan is part of the development plan for the area, although reference is made to Policy D1. Policy D1 seeks to ensure that new development reflects the character of the area and its surroundings. The proposed layout is cramped and does not reflect the area, which is characterised by detached houses in large plots. There is inadequate space between the buildings and they have much smaller gardens than surrounding properties, leading to overdevelopment of the plot.

Whilst the principle of backland development has been accepted within the wider area, such development should be subservient to the frontage property. Overdevelopment and cramped layouts have been refused locally (eg. Bushwood Drive). In this case, the proposed layout is overdevelopment of the plot which is not subservient to the frontage. A less cramped, smaller development would be more acceptable in principle.

3. Consideration should also be given to the impact of the proposals on trees. As the Forum pointed out in relation to the previous application, there is a mature tree close to the boundary in a similar position to that shown on the layout plan as being removed. This should be checked on site as it is unclear if this mature tree is to be retained. Policy NE1 of the Neighbourhood Plan seeks the retention of mature trees which are a valued amenity and an integral part of the area's green character and appearance. Its absence from the layout plan and potential loss supports the view that this proposal represents over development.
4. Although design and scale are reserved for later consideration, this is fundamental to consideration of whether the principle of development is acceptable in this location. If these properties are intended to be 3 storeys in height (as the layout plan would suggest in view of the rooflight/ dormers), then the overall scale and massing of the proposed development would be very similar to that of the apartment block recently refused. However, insufficient information has been submitted to make a reasonable assessment. This is a relevant and important consideration in this case.



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5. In conclusion, the Neighbourhood Forum asks that this application be refused on grounds of inadequate information, overdevelopment of the plot, and development out of character with the area, contrary to both Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies. In the event that the Council is minded to approve the application, then conditions should be imposed which limit the height of the dwellings to two storeys to ensure satisfactory backland development which respects the character of the area; and also to protect existing mature trees on site in line with Policy NE1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Jane Aykroyd

Chair

Knowle Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Forum