

Knowle Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Forum (KDBH NF)

46 Avenue Road, Dorridge

Notification of Planning Application - PL/2019/02619/MINFDW

The KDBH NF wishes to object to the above planning application on the following grounds.

The Council has previously refused an application on this site in 2018 for the erection of one new dwelling and alterations / extensions to the existing dwelling under application PL/2018/02209/PPFL.

Refusal of the previous planning application was on the grounds that the proposed new dwelling would represent poor urban design having regard to its size, position and plot formation and would undermine the established grain of development in this location by virtue of being positioned to the front of the existing dwelling. This was contrary to Policy P5 and P15 of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 and to provisions within Supplementary Planning Guidance 'New Housing in Context' and to provisions of good design as advocated within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Further, the Council highlighted the following policies of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 considered relevant:

P8 Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion

P10 Natural Environment

P14 Amenity

P15 Securing Design Quality

Since that refusal, the Neighbourhood Plan has been made and the Forum now wishes to make the following representations.

1. The previous reasons for refusal remain valid in relation to the current application.
2. The applicants have not considered the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan even though they are now part of the statutory Development Plan. The most relevant policies that the applicant should seek to satisfy in the Neighbourhood Plan are D1, VC5 and NE1. They have failed to demonstrate that they comply with these policies.

3. **Policy D1 Character and Appearance** – this policy sets out the criteria that we expect a new development to satisfy including that any alterations to existing buildings or additions to the plot should be in harmony with the village character and sit well in the landscape; be of a density characteristic of the area and reflect existing layouts characteristic of the surrounding area. This includes respecting established building lines and plot widths. It also requires the findings of the Heritage and Character Assessment 2017 and Masterplanning Design and Design Coding Study to be taken into account.

The Golden Triangle is recognised in the Heritage and Character Study as one of 6 locally distinctive character areas. It was historically typified by large plots of land with large houses and in some cases bungalows constructed originally around the 1950's. In the recent past there has been a trend towards the sub-division of the large plots into smaller parcels enabling additional housing to be slotted in. There have been a number of instances of tandem development, often involving bungalows, with one house being built directly behind the frontage property. The overall effect is to construct a larger number of properties within the Golden Triangle at the expense of the larger gardens and the loss of the uniqueness of character and feeling of openness.

The Forum considers that it is time the Council acted to stop this on- going densification and erosion of character that has made this area special. We therefore support the Council's previous decision to refuse a similar application on this plot. We do not consider the current application addresses the design concerns previously raised and we ask the Council to maintain its decision in the basis of conflict with Policy D1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4. **Policy NE1 Trees and Ecology and Policy VC5 Green Streets** – these policies seek to maintain and enhance the green streets that are so typical of the character of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Avenue Road falls under our definition of a green street. We note that the planning application form states that trees and hedgerows are affected but it is not clear to what extent. We also note that no information is submitted with regard to any impact on ecology. We request further information on the effect of the proposed development on trees, frontage greenery and ecology.

The Neighbourhood Forum concludes this application conflicts with both Solihull and Neighbourhood Plan policies on design and protection of trees. We request it be refused.

Gillian Griggs on behalf of Jane Aykroyd
Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Forum