



Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath (KDBH) Neighbourhood Forum

Response to Planning Application PL/2019/00346/MINFDW

2 Spring Coppice Drive, Dorridge

During development of the KDBH Neighbourhood Plan, the Neighbourhood Forum regularly engaged with residents and one of the recurring themes was a desire to downsize into smaller houses, and in particular into bungalows (obviously more suitable for older and less mobile residents). The shortage of bungalows in the KDBH Area is a regular complaint and it is noticeable that none of the more recent large developments in the Area has included any bungalows.

The KDBH Housing Needs Assessment, part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base, recorded the view of local estate agents who also commented on the demand for, and shortage of, bungalows in our Area. At the same time, there were many adverse comments on the proliferation of demolitions of existing dwellings and their replacement with substantial 5, or more, bedroom family houses.

The proposal concerning 2, Spring Coppice Drive, which would involve the loss of a bungalow and its replacement with a six bedroom house, raises the same general issue as the proposed demolition of 162 Brown's Lane where we commented that the loss of a bungalow would set an unwelcome precedent that could lead to loss of the few bungalows we currently have in the Area.

The Forum acknowledges that these comments raise a new issue which may be too late in relation to consideration of these specific applications. However, we wish to bring to the Council's attention a general concern about the steady erosion of a limited and valued component of housing mix in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This could adversely affect the housing mix that the Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to achieve and potentially impact on the character of an area. The Neighbourhood Forum will take the opportunity to raise this matter with the Council at its first quarterly Neighbourhood Plan review meeting.