

**18/07520/FUL**

**Consultations and Notification Responses**

Ward Councillor Preliminary Comments

**Councillor Graham Peart**

I have looked at the proposal in more detail and I believe that it does have some merit. If you remain minded to refuse the application with the current amendments, as it has aroused much interest locally, I will request that it be determined by the Planning Committee.

Further comments: In the interest of fairness and consistency, I remain of the opinion that in principle, this application should be permitted for the reasons given below.

The purpose for designating some ground floor space as bedrooms is solely due to the family having a daughter with a condition that requires bedroom and treatment room accommodation suitable for her special needs.

There are a number of comments regarding the size of the proposed dwelling if developed that are misleading. If the development is permitted, the house would be an average 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom property of a size that is very common in the village. The properties that back on to the site are 2 and 3 Monkton Way. They were constructed originally as modern 'Georgian' style 4 bed, 2 bath properties. Both have been extended to be 6 bedroom houses and significantly larger than the proposals for Monkenden.

The revised plans show a roof height of 7.45 metres that lower than all the surrounding properties, 3 Monkton Way being 7.8 metres and the neighbouring Strawmoor at 8.45 metres therefore the comment that it would be overbearing would seem to be inconsistent with what already exists.

The comments regarding privacy also appear to be inconsistent. When 3 Monkton Way was developed the new first floor bedroom windows were positioned so that they directly overlook the garden of Monkton. The more recent development of 2 Monkton Way overlooks the garden of Monkton more directly than the development of Monkton would overlook the garden of 4 Monkton Way.

Regarding character of existing houses, elsewhere in the village, the bungalow at Pyecroft was permitted to be demolished and a very modern designed two storey house constructed in its place. It is alongside the two oldest and listed cottages in the village and overlooking the listed Speen church. I did object to this contrast at the time and it was nevertheless permitted. The more traditional design of Monkton is far less of a shock with or without the timber cladding. As an aside the Speen church hall building proposed a new kitchen extension that was originally intended to be brick and flint to match the church but the planning team insisted on timber cladding as a contrast to the original build. There is such diversity of design styles constructed over the past two hundred years, it is difficult to define exactly what is in character.

The matter of the car parking can easily be resolved as there sufficient space within the site to park 3 cars if necessary and it is a makeweight argument.

I am not generally in favour of the relentless extension of houses as there are very few modest sized homes remaining in the village making it very difficult for young families to remain or move into the area. However I am keen to see consistency in the planning decisions and this application would appear to be reasonable in principle in comparison with other recent developments.

Therefore I would ask that the decision be made by the Planning Committee to allow all parties an opportunity to express their views in public.

## Parish/Town Council Comments/Internal and External Consultees

### **Lacey Green Parish Council – Objects**

The Council objects to this application for the following reasons:

1. Overdevelopment of the site. The proposal will overdevelop the plot, converting the existing bungalow into a two storey six bedroom house with a very high pitched roof.
2. Monkenden is set within the conservation area of Speen and the proposed development will not be in keeping and will dominate the surrounding area, including the neighbouring historic conservation cottages in Studridge Lane.
3. Being set close to the existing boundaries, the proposed planned six bedroom will overshadow and impact adversely the 'rights of light' for neighbouring properties, especially 3 Monkton Way, which is at the rear of the said property.
4. The height and volume of proposed windows will overlook neighbouring properties, impacting their privacy.
5. Insufficient parking on site. A six bedroom house is likely to require more than only one space allocated and Studridge Lane is too narrow to permit parking in the road.
6. The adverse effect on the character and appearance of the streetscape in a conservation area.

### **Conservation Officer Spatial Planning – Comments on revised scheme.**

The revised plans for the building are more in keeping with the scale of surrounding properties. If you are minded to approve, it is recommended that consent is subject to conditions: approval of materials – new flint work to be carried out in traditional manner- use of timber joinery

### **Conservation Officer Spatial Planning – Comments based on original scheme**

The existing bungalow was built approximately 20 years ago and is located within the Speen Conservation Area. Studridge Lane is a narrow lane along which buildings are informally dispersed, enhancing the relaxed, rural character. There is a diversity in appearance reflecting the different ages of the buildings but the traditional buildings in the lane tend to be relatively modest in scale, massing and proportions. The proposal to extend the building by creating a new first floor over its entire footprint and the increased height would in effect create a new dwelling and significantly increase its prominence. There are concerns that the overall scale and massing would not sit comfortably in this informal context and would fail to reflect the proportions of surrounding properties. While in principle a two storey building would not be out of keeping with the general character and appearance of the conservation area, it is recommended that the proposals are reduced in height and scale to respond better to the surrounding context.

### Representations

4 objections were received making the following comments

- Loss of privacy
- Scale and height of the proposal
- Loss of view
- The proposal would not enhance the character and appearance of the original property.
- Contravention of Green Belt and Conservation Area policy.
- Insufficient parking.
- Right to light
- Precedence for future similar development in Speen

1 letter of support was received making the following comments

- The bungalow is not in keeping with the neighbouring dwellings and by enhancing it will add value to it and the other properties around it.
- The personal circumstances of the applicant should also be taken into consideration.

