To: Horsham District Council and Southwater Parish Council

Application Number: DC/22/0186 – Objection representation

Dear Sirs

Introduction:

The application for development seeks consent, by way of an application for prior approval, for the erection of an additional storey, the effect of which would create a three-storey dwelling on the site, (increasing the height by circa 3.14 metres above the existing roof line).

Background:

By way of background, Netherton Close comprises six modest chalet bungalows (comprising ground and first floor) in a cul-de-sac arrangement.

While a number of these dwellings have been sympathetically extended at first floor level to create additional accommodation by way of dormer extensions within the original pitched roof, the properties are of similar design, scale and appearance.

Representations – objection:

Accordingly, I submit an objection on the following grounds:

1. **Design and appearance**

The scale and design of this development (tantamount to a three-storey dwelling, ie, ground, first and second floor) would:

(a) represent an unduly dominant and incongruous addition which would fail to reflect the established pattern and character of surrounding development and would result in incompatibility with the existing street scene;

(b) not relate sympathetically to the built surroundings and instead would detract from the visual amenities of the locality;

(c) not integrate with, complement, respond nor respect the character of the existing landscape; and

(d) not provide an attractive environment and (owing to its height) would have an adverse impact on the character of the street scene and neighbouring properties.

Related policy grounds:

These representations amount to material planning considerations and demonstrate that the proposed development would be contrary to:

(a) policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015);
(b) policies 16 and 17 of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan (2019-2031); and
(c) policies 19 and 20 of the Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19).

The relevant sections of which have been copied below.

2. Unacceptable loss of amenity

The development, by virtue of its scale, massing, additional height and related bulk, would prove:

(a) overbearing and result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for the occupants of 6 Netherton Close (which is situated at a right angle to 5 Netherton Close and is located only a few metres away); and

(b) unduly dominant creating an impact and relationship between the two properties which would not be expected in this location resulting in unacceptable harm.

Related policy grounds:

These representations amount to material planning considerations and demonstrate that the proposed development would be contrary to:

(c) policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015);
(d) policies 16 and 17 of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan (2019-2031); and
(e) policies 19 and 20 of the Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19).

The relevant sections of which have been copied below.

3. The Application Form for Prior Approval:

The application form states:

"*please provide details of the impacts on the amenity of any adjoining premises including overlooking, privacy and the loss of light and how these will be mitigated. In the case of upwards extensions this incudes neighbouring properties which are not contiguous with the proposed development site. Furter details should be provided for these application types*".

The applicant's response stipulated "*None. Windows will only be located in the front and rear elevations of the house, overlooking the street at the front and the garden at the rear*".

I would suggest, therefore, that insufficient consideration has been given to the potential impact of the proposal on neighbouring properties.

4. Loss of light, overlooking and loss of privacy

It should be noted that the construction of the additional storey, which will extend beyond the existing roofline of all properties in the cul-de-sac, will have an adverse impact on the amenity of the occupants of 6 Netherton Close. (The adverse impact will be further compounded by the proposed side extension, which is set to immediately abut the boundary of 6 Netherton Close, and is currently the subject of a separate application for a Certificate of Lawful Development). The proposed development will result in a loss of light, diminished privacy and increased overlooking.

While it is most certainly never a pleasure to raise objections to any development proposals put forward by the occupants of 5 Netherton Close, and one would have welcomed the opportunity to discuss and potentially support any initiatives, it is important to clarify that any private law matters will be pursued separately, as needed, to ensure that all concerns are properly addressed and in full compliance with the law.

PLANNING POLICY ENDORSING MATERIAL PLANNING GROUNDS FOR OBJECTION:

The following excerpts from the relevant planning policies clearly demonstrate that the proposed development is unacceptable, as it fails to meet established guidelines and would result in significant harm to the surrounding area and neighbouring properties.

A. Horsham District Planning Framework November 2015

Policy 32 states, inter alia, that good design is a key element in sustainable development. Development will be required to enhance and protect the locally distinctive characters, through good design, landscaping both within a scheme and having regard to the impact on surrounding landscapes and ensuring that local, social and environmental characteristics are considered.

In particular, development will be expected to [paraphrased]:

Provide an attractive environment;
Complement locally distinctive characters; and
Contribute a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings and the historic landscape in which they sit

Policy 33 states, inter alia, that in order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment developments shall be required to:

(a) Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development;

(b) Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views;

(c) Presume in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development.

B. Southwater Neighbourhood Plan

(i) SNP 16.1 (d) (Design) states, inter alia, that all development must be of high quality design.

In Southwater this means making sure the design of new development actively responds to other properties in the vicinity ensuring no unacceptable impacts on residential amenity occur.

(ii) SNP 17.2 (Site Levels) seeks to ensure, inter alia, that developments respect the existing topography of the area and that extensions will not be supported if they have an adverse impact upon the surrounding environment.

In Particular, SNP 17.2 states that development will not be supported if the final building's height would have an adverse impact upon neighbouring properties or the character of surrounding areas.

C. Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19)

Strategic Policy 19 (Development Quality):

This policy provides, inter alia, that development must:

(i) provide an attractive environment;
(ii) responds to locally distinctive characters and heritage of the surrounding area (including building types and architectural styles); and
(iii) have consideration to the built historic environment and townscape and the way they integrate with their structural surroundings and the landscape in which they sit.

Strategic Policy 20 (Development Principles):

Broadly, this policy seeks to ensure that proposals are of high quality, well designed and take account of the existing character of the area.

In particular, it states that design:

(i) must avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of the existing and future users and occupiers of nearby property and land, for example, due to overlooking, over dominance or overshadowing;
(ii) must ensure that the scale, massing and appearance relate sympathetically with the build surroundings and landscape;
(iii) must respect and respond to the character of the surrounding area; and
(iv) relate sympathetically to the local landscape.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

6 Netherton Close