

Bexhill Heritage

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Caring for Bexhill's past,
present and future.

Alter and Extend with first and second floor additions, to existing building 40 - 42 Cooden Sea Road Bexhill on Sea RR/2018/1857/P

Bexhill Heritage object to the application because it will result in a substantial overdevelopment of the site. As a consequence it will appear dominant, extremely prominent, overbearing in relation to adjacent buildings and detrimental to the appearance of the locality, in particular the visually significant central area of Little Common.

We are aware that there is an extant planning permission for the total redevelopment of the site. Whilst we accept this is a material consideration in determining the new application, it is not overriding and the Council is able, indeed duty bound, to determine the new application on its merits.

The plans and site visits confirm the introduction of a further storey on the existing building will result in the flat roofed structure being a half storey above the ridge line to the building to the south. This difference assumes much greater significance because the existing adjoining building, with its pitched roof, recesses from first floor level, whereas the proposed building mass will rise in a sheer, largely flat faced three storeys high to its flat roof parapet. This will be a gross and unpleasant contrast and an extremely unharmonious element in this important part of the street scene. The buildings to the south on this side of the street are otherwise all two storey domestic scale with pitched roofs.

Turning the corner into Meads Lane the aspect will also be very poor. The three storeys continue and, being built off existing floor levels, will in addition to the full new storey be be even higher than the building applied for in 2016. This contrast with the modest height of the two storey houses in Meads Lane (Numbers 2-8) some of which are themselves set lower than road level, will be considerable, giving an overbearing aspect to the heightened building. This will be detrimental to the street scene at this prominent end of Meads Lane and detrimental to the residential amenity of the dwellings opposite.

These factors alone are sufficient to warrant refusal of the application conflicting as it does with Policy EN3 in the Adopted Local Plan in several respects.

Furthermore the elevational treatment of the building exaggerates its dominance. Although the plans show a regular rhythm to the fenestration, and some articulation arising from the existing building, the detailed design above the ground floor shop level is not sufficiently developed to reduce the dominance of the flat roofed block.

The predominant impression of the area is of two storey domestic scale buildings with pitched roofs some with dormers of varying designs. Though there are three storey buildings in the vicinity their disposition or their design are such that they do not assume the dominance of the proposed building and are inoffensive. For example the largest of them, the Tesco store and the flats above, Bonham

Court, has its narrow end facing the street, is set well back and nearly half of its site is open, comprising car parking for the shop and flats. It is pleasingly detailed above the retail level with a pitched roof (false), projecting bays tile hung, and good detailing. The design was in response to its surroundings. There is then a two storey building pitched roof being flats over shops and the redevelopment underway adjoining which is set well back from the road (15m approx.) , and has a large tree in front. Other buildings in the Little Common centre are of domestic scale. Those which are three storeys are pitched roofed and fit well with the general character of the area. The block of building proposed for the application site does not fit with these in its mass or style.

The principle of a redevelopment of this corner site has been established and is needed. The proposal is not the right solution. A third floor could be successfully incorporated by reducing the amount of accommodation at that level and including a pitched roof, full or false.

The application should be refused and the applicant invited to consider alternatives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Beales". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'D'.

David Beales (Planning Officer)