

23 July 2021

Ms Liz Hobden
Head of Planning
Brighton & Hove City Council
1st Floor, Hove Town Hall
Norton Road, Hove
East Sussex. BN3 3BQ

Dear Ms Hobden,

**RE: Planning Application BH2021/01017 – Development at 20 St Helens Drive
Hove BN3 8EA**

We are disappointed to be having to again write to you concerning the above application.

You have asked for further comment on an amendment received to the application.

This is now the fourth time members of the community are having to write objections to this proposed development. It is causing great distress in the area to the neighbours, including the many elderly people that live in the area and call this part of Hangleton their home.

We have received multiple phone calls this week alone from residents who are distressed at having to again object and having their original considered objections thrown into uncertainty through this amendment.

We can understand why residents are so frustrated with this process.

The Council ruled against a previous application for this site (**BH2020/002271**) last year. It then approved a Certificate of Lawfulness (**BH2021/00108**), although I have been advised by the Council that this has no bearing on the ultimate decision that will be made for this application (**BH2021/01017**). Now an amendment has been made and residents must go through the process all over again. One of our residents remarked today that it looks like games are being played. They are so upset.

Our comment on the amendment is as follows:

There is no significant change to the application, except form the fact that the front dormer is now front roof light and the windows on the side have slightly shifted. The overall size of building, which is what our residents are objecting is the same.

As the scope of development remains largely the same as for the first application our objection remains the same and is on the following grounds:

1. **Appearance and size of the buildings is not appropriate** – When the bungalows on St Helens Drive were originally designed, the layout, spacing and scale of the buildings was carefully planned to ensure that they would be in keeping with the landscape and offer views of the Downs to each bungalow. This large new building would disrupt this design and mark a departure from the size of other bungalows in the area.
2. **Approval would set a precedent for wider development** – Should this gain approval, it would open the floodgates to further garden developments in the street and area. As such this application needs to be treated with the utmost scrutiny.
3. **Loss of view** – The proposed development would impinge on the views of neighbours. While the new development would itself enjoy views of the Downs; long-standing neighbouring residents will be deprived of their views.
4. **Adjoining residents will suffer overshadowing, overlooking or loss of privacy** – The terrace would overlook the gardens of the neighbouring bungalows.
5. **Community Opposition** – The neighbours are all against this development and their voices should be heard. There are many elderly people in the area who are really stressed out over this situation. It has gone on far too long. It has been refused once before and we call on you to bring an end to these application.

In our previous letters we have asked that a Council Officer visit this site in person to see for themselves the unsuitable nature of the site and how out of character with the area this development would be. This very point was raised by a resident today who suspects this has never happened. We had to tell them we did not know as the Council has never confirmed whether it has conducted a site visit. Can you advise whether this has happened yet or is likely to? Covid-19 restrictions have now eased and there should be no further delay to an officer inspection.

This matter is something as ward councillors we feel very strongly about. We request to meet with you at the site during the next fortnight so we can personally show you how much it doesn't blend in with the area.

We ask that you rule against this proposal once and for all so that residents are no longer subject to this prolonged process, where similar applications are put in and rejected, only after extensive distress and worry is caused. Surely this is not a fair or correct use of the planning system?

If you are minded to approve this development, we are calling this application in to planning committee where we would give a presentation to express opposition to the plans.

Yours sincerely,

COUNCILLOR DAWN BARNETT
Councillor for Hangleton & Knoll Ward

COUNCILLOR NICK LEWRY
Councillor for Hangleton & Knoll Ward

