



107 Morris Drive
Billingshurst
West Sussex
RH14 9ST

Telephone 01403 784985
Mobile 07584 308 408

Email : nuthurstparishclk@btinternet.com
Web: www.nuthurst.parishcouncil.net

Ms Tamara Dale
Planning Officer
Horsham District Council
Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex RH12 1RL

5 February 2018

Dear Ms Dale

DC/17/2524: Variation of Condition 1 to previously approved application DC/15/2493 (Erection of three two storey houses). Minor material amendments to facilitate alterations to approved site layout and approved designs. Micklepage, Nuthurst Street, Nuthurst, West Sussex.

Amended plans dated 11 December 2017

Latest plans dated 22 January 2018

LETTER 2

Space above the Garage

Emma Parkes' e-mail of 31 January 2018 states "However the ability, or not, to use the room above the garage as a small bedroom is still a key matter". In point of fact, there are many key matters that should be considered in relation to this planning application, and one particularly important key is the Planning Inspector's recent dismissal of a similar planning application at Church Road, Mannings Heath and especially the heavy weight he put on the Parish's Neighbourhood Plan. However, as Emma has raised this issue of space above the garage, then the Parish Council is responding in this separate letter.

Letter 2 deals specifically and only with the space above the garage in DC/15/2493 and demonstrates that it cannot be classified as a habitable bedroom. Letter 1 deals with all other objections to the above planning application.

Tamara asked Trevor Nash by e-mail on 1 February 2018 whether this space above the garage could be considered a habitable room, capable of being used as a bedroom. Trevor Nash's reply of the same date asserted that the space could be used as habitable accommodation but provided no data and guidelines to support that assertion. It is also notable that he made no response stating that the space could be used as a bedroom.

The Parish Council does not believe the space above the garage could be used as a habitable bedroom for the following reasons:

1. The Design and Access Statement that accompanied DC/15/2493

This was provided by the original applicant and clearly states:

- *“the proposed 3 houses are primarily aimed at the down-sizing market”*
- *“the plans are for 3 number two storey houses, each with three bedrooms”*
- *“the roof space over the garage offers a multipurpose area, albeit with reduced headroom. Good for hobbies or storage....”*

The plans that received planning permission were for 3 bedrooms, in line with the Neighbourhood Plan requirements.

It is clear that the original plans for DC/15/2493 did not consider the roof space to be a habitable bedroom. Indeed, we note that it is referred to as “roof space” and not even described as a room.

2. Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (DCLG March 2015)

- This document states that a single bedroom must be at least 2.15m wide and any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m wide is not counted
- The width of the space above the garage in DC/15/2493 above 1.5m high is only 1.6m, which clearly does not meet the requirement.

Therefore, according to this document, the roof space above the garage is not wide enough to constitute a bedroom.

3. Minimum Ceiling Heights/comment from homebuilding.co.uk

- *“Although the legal minimum ceiling height has now been removed from the Building Regulations, there is still a practical minimum height and this is especially worth thinking about in attic and cellar conversions. All rooms should normally have a floor to ceiling height of at least 2.1m throughout (standard ceiling height is 2.4m). In rooms with sloping ceilings, at least 50% of the floor area should normally have a floor to ceiling height of at least 2.1m.”* (homebuilding.co.uk)
 - The percentage of the floor area that has a floor to ceiling height of 2.1m (in the roof space above the garage in DC/15/2493) is only 3% which falls far short of 50%.
 - As this is described as a roof space in the Design and Access Statement, then for this space even to be considered as “habitable bedroom” then the space should meet criteria for loft/attic conversion.

The measurements clearly show that the roof space does not meet the currently used standards for floor space area with a height of 2.1m.

4. Rental standards for rooms (arun.gov.uk)

Arun and Chichester District Councils, for example, provide clear accreditation standards for landlords on what constitutes adequate, useable living spaces:

- *“The floor to ceiling height should be no less than 2.1m over 50% of the floor area.”*
- *“Minimum room sizes are subject to each room being of a shape offering adequate usable living space”. The degree of sloping ceiling prevents the space being usable.*

This shows that the roof space would not fit either of those criteria for being an adequate useable living space and therefore by rental standards is not a bedroom.

5. Adequate positioning of a bed in the roof space is not practicable

- For a person to sit up in a single bed of width 1m and height 0.7m there needs to be an effective minimum height of 1.7m.
- There is only a strip of 1.15m that has a height of 1.7m or more. This leaves only 7.5cm of space either side of the bed which does not leave

enough room for anyone to get in or out of the bed, other than crawl under the eaves. This is unlikely to satisfy fire regulations.

This shows that the roof space cannot properly accommodate a single bed and therefore it cannot be classed as a habitable bedroom.

For all of the above reasons the Parish Council rejects the current applicant's contention that the original planning permission permitted 3 bedroomed houses, plus a space above the garage that was capable of being used as a 4th bedroom. The Parish Council reiterates that the original planning permission which was for 3 houses each with 3 bedrooms only.

What the applicant has done, without permission, is to raise the roofline above the garages by 1.4m. By this action, he has created a fourth bedroom with en-suite bathroom and this contrary to both planning permission and the Neighbourhood Plan. The planning application should therefore be refused.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hall
Clerk to Nuthurst Parish Council

Copy: Emma Parkes, Head of Development