

PLANNING REF : 242066
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 10 Longmoor House
: Norton Road, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG402BD
SUBMITTED BY : Miss Lynne Fagents
DATE SUBMITTED : 18/11/2024

COMMENTS:

I would like to state my strong objection to planning application of the proposed additional 2 stories on Ascot House development on Finchampstead road as per planning application 242066. I vehemently oppose any further development due to the following multiple reasons.

It is with sadness and indignation that I and the surrounding residents find ourselves back in this position again having successfully seen a similar plan being overturned on previous occasion. As was apparent in the consultation meeting with the developers Klara Ascot Homes in 2020 where they failed to consider, answer or address the impact on surrounding residents, it appears that the developer continue to disregard the views and psychological impact of the increase in height and addition of additional 10 dwelling will have on the residents and the surrounding area.

As a resident of Longmoor house in Norton road, I am in close proximity to Ascot house and already adversely affected by the conversion of Ascot house from an office to a domestic dwelling. This situation will not only be further exasperated but significantly worsened by the addition of the raising and modification of the roof of the existing building plus the erection of an extension to form additional first, second and third floor accommodation in order to create 10 additional dwellings as stands in the latest proposal.

Similarly to the previous consultation round, the increased height would have a direct negative impact on Longmoor house and Norton road locations as will be intrusive and a direct invasion of privacy. My living space, the patio and garden area will be majorly affected by overlooking as will be in direct view from the additional flats. I will not be able to sit on my patio garden area without being observed by multiple dwellings and require blinds to be down to not be viewed in certain parts of my home. As it currently stands the existing top floor corner flat with extensive corner window views my personal area but the addition of more dwelling at a higher level will significantly increase overlooking, privacy violation and intrusion. I feel this will cause personal duress and restrict free movements in my house and garden and have a psychological impact on the quality of my daily lives. I have no doubt that this will also affect other residents of Kendrick road and beyond.

Further, to its overlooking, I will suffer loss of light and clear sky view as the building will be substantially imposing, towering in height over our building and be significantly visually overbearing in nature. Due to the falling slope aspect up to its position on Finchampstead road, it lays in a higher position than the residential streets and area behind it to the east, north and south. Consequently, it will significantly visually dominate the skyline views in not just Norton Road but other surrounding roads including

Kendrick close, Carey road, and also visually intrude into the 'conservation area' of Denmark street and Langborough road. On examination of the developer plans the slope angle does not seem to be accurately represented and subsequently the true impact on the skyline downhill of it appears somewhat masked and ambiguous. I formally request and urge planners and local and borough councilors and representatives to attend the development site to assess design issues and the above named streets in person and look at the mock up views and photographs provided of the views from resident's houses so they can fully understand the development on the ground and see the negative impact on the skyline and the developers misrepresentation impressions of the slope in their submitted plans.

Another significant impact which leads me to object to the increased dwelling numbers at the development is the traffic and parking problems. This is an area which already suffers from traffic and roadside congestion, idling traffic and lack of parking spaces. The area is very busy especially at peak times and can be difficult for pedestrian crossing. Increase 10 more dwellings will further put strain on an already existing traffic hot spot, which has a lot of congestion and idling traffic which adds to air quality issues and subsequently potential health issues for those in close proximity including asthma. I would suggest a traffic survey/ emission testing is undertaken before committing as travel levels have increased post covid return to work. In addition there also seems to be a lack of clarity on EV provision which gives little alternative for residents not to have combustion engine options.

The plan does not seem to clearly show where the additional parking spaces for the 10 extra dwelling will be accommodated. The extra dwellings will it push Ascot House residents and visitors onto surrounding roads and put further pressure on existing facilities. As it is Norton road has significant parking issues with town centre users taking up road parking to evade parking fees and this has led to blocking of roads and multiple times the entrances itself to Longmoor houses car park as well as just directly using of the car parking spaces allotted to residents. The developer has previously suggested solution to Carey road which has same parking problem that it could install parking permit systems. The developers should take ability for the impact the additional dwelling will have on surrounding roads to assess within the context of overall local capacity, not to propose a system which restricts other residents and transfers responsibility to them and the council both having to bear the cost of its implementation.

Further to lack of provisions of parking spaces, the existing spaces provided are already tight in area and means that extra maneuvering required and longer time spent in the area and subsequently more exhaust emissions are produced. Existing hedging is inadequate to create effective barriers. The carpark is adjacent to existing back gardens and houses and means that the increased vehicle emissions are created by more traffic, including delivery drivers and more maneuvering and staying longer in area will result in reducing local air quality in this area as well as the wider environmental consequences of contributing to climate change.

Having been part of the previous application for extending building height and attending the consultation meeting, what seems very clear

is that the developers do not seem to take on the views and concerns of the surrounding residents which goes against due diligence and mission statement for community involvement to take on views. For example, at the planning consultation meeting which I attended, design and overlooking objections were countered with advocacy of the perceived advantages of viewpoints for the new residents and totally failed to acknowledge the stated views and impact on the existing residents even when the issue was repeatedly raised. This appears to be the case again with this new proposal where many of the same issues are present and the same disregard of impact and concerns of the residents.

To add to this now they have the existing residents of Ascot house to consider who did not purchase the flats believing that further development would occur reducing light etc. Further it appears from other objections lodged that the existing Ascot house residents are not getting service level agreements the developer promised with flooding, roof leaks, lack of facilities, correct plans provided both in flats layout and parking areas which suggests that they have misrepresented themselves or are not providing the correct standard of service level agreements. One of these areas is poor waste management where bins have been positioned on the back fence and not completed to agreed service levels which has also impacted residents of Norton road and Longmoor House with odour and increased vermin activity at Longmoor house.

It is noteworthy that despite previously being overturned by the council that the support structure for the additional levels was prebuilt into the development, which seems to show both improper process as is not shown on the flat drawings as stated by current Ascot House Resident objection and utter disregard for both the views and concerns of surrounding residents and the council and planning committee that overturned previous application for extension

It seems to me that the reasons still stand and yet again the residents views are not taken into consideration and not accurate to the statement of community involvement. It also seems apparent when assessing the proposal in context with wider local area plans that there are a number of other contradictions and areas which fall short of consideration of local planning and policy. Including lack of provision of any social housing which is required for a major development which the addition would seem to now qualify as such and also Suitable Alternate Natural Greenspace (SANG) land provision as shown to be both in local and national policy including being part of the Thames Basin Heath mitigation Plan.

It further seems to have not considered the local planning masterplan, and character of the area with its design, materials and distinct lack of Architectural value. One hand Klara developers claim the proposal area to be part of Elms field character area, but it does not show aesthetic consideration of remaining in character as the surrounding developments do. The building proposal design is visually ugly, bulky boxy and not pleasing to the eye or sympathetic to its position as an entrance point into Wokingham town a place known for its Architectural merit and the high aesthetic building standard shown in surrounding area. Its design is not in keeping with the local area from which it can be seen and is not pleasing to

the eye or what one would want to be seen in the entry position into the town of heritage value.

In summary I strongly object to the planning proposal and urge the planning committee to consider the proposal in relation to the above stated areas of concern, visit the area to see on the ground how the objections relate to local context and to take into account the views and concerns of the impact on surrounding residents.

Attachment view photos to be added.