

**Design amendments to the front, rear, and side elevations.**

**1 Oakfields Way Catherine De Barnes Solihull B91 2TR**

**Ref. No: PL/2023/02518/MINFHO**

The Parish Council (PC) are in receipt of the above retrospective planning application and wish to make the following response – to many of the statements and comments included in the Planning and Design Statement.

**Planning and Design Statement**

**1) Clause 6 (page 2)**

From making a visual inspection of the site it appears that the “high mature hedging “mentioned in this clause has been removed or significantly cut down to below fence height. Should this be the case, then the statement “the rear garden within the site is visually contained by a high mature hedging “is totally inaccurate and does not represent the current situation vis a vis the visual aspect. The rear of this property now, has a totally uninterrupted view of the neighbouring property at 410 Lugtrout Lane.

**2) Clause 17 (page3)**

It is a matter of opinion that the dwelling now built is “*more functional in design and aesthetic*” We believe the ‘new design’ to be characterless and basic in appearance and does not sit comfortably in appearance with neighbouring properties. The dwelling is significantly larger in appearance to most other dwellings in the street and believe the ‘new design’ makes the property stand out rather being visually sympathetic to the surroundings.

**3) Clause 24 (page 8)**

This clause states “*Under the approved scheme, excessive architectural detailing on the principal elevation competed for attention and features such as the false chimney stack, decorative sash style windows, and forward projecting glazed feature made the front elevation appear busy and overcrowded.*”

The PC cannot agree that the features originally included in the approved application and now removed can in any way be classed as excessive. Rather they gave this large property some character which is not the case now. The originally approved window designs were sympathetic both in size and style to those in neighbouring properties and the gabled porch gave the front elevation some character now sadly lacking. Had the current proposals been included in the previous planning application we feel that because of its bland appearance and the size of the dwelling we are sure that the outcome on approval may well have been different. The negative impact on the street scene of the current design is, in our opinion, beyond question. The “*ultra-modern design*” referred to in this clause has resulted in a building, basic in design and totally lacking in inspiration and character.

**4) Clause 25 (page7)**

We do not agree with the statement “*Taking into account that planning permission had previously been granted for a hipped roof, simplifying the roof through the removal of the forward projecting gable feature has had limited impact on the character of the street scene*”. We feel the impact to be significant.

**5) Clause 27 (page7)**

Whilst we agree that the neighbouring properties are mixed in appearance the basic character of those properties are very similar in that their front elevations are not flat, nor featureless - most with protruding porches and garages, with windows of similar overall sizes and styles although the materials used may be different. The design of the dwelling approved was sympathetic in style to the neighbouring properties whilst the overall size is greater. The current design incorporated in to the building is not.

**6) Clause 28 (page7)**

We do not agree that the fundamental style of the building has been retained.

**7) Clause 29 (page 7)**

We do not agree that that the previous features can be seen as excessive- in fact they minimised the impact that this building has on the current street scene. In addition, we cannot agree that the design respects the character and appearance of the street scene- in our view it does exactly the opposite. The design as approved we feel respected the character to a significantly greater degree that the current design does.

**8) Clause 31 (page8)**

We cannot agree with the first sentence of this clause which states " *The completed works would also not result in oppressive or overbearing impact or feelings of dominance or visual intrusion being experienced by neighbours.*" Now that the rear hedgerow seems to have been removed, we feel the private amenity of the residents of number 410 Lugtrout Lane has been negatively impacted.

**9) Clause 35 (page8)**

We consider the important landscaping has been removed i.e. by reason of the apparent removal of the high mature hedging at the rear of the property mentioned earlier in our response. We note that the plan drawing shows the current hedging (laurel) on the northern border along the edge of the footpath. We feel that it is vital that this hedging remains although we do accept it could be reduced slightly in height and if the application be approved it be conditional on this hedge being maintained and the rear hedge being replaced.

The Parish Council are extremely disappointed that the applicant has decided to go ahead incorporating the new designs and seeking approval retrospectively. We believe the changes in design and style of the windows and the elimination of the gabled porch has contributed significantly to the negative impact on the current street scene and feel that had this design been proposed in the original application the outcome would have been different. In view of the nature of the amendments covered by this application we feel it is important that Officers and, if relevant, Members of the Planning Committee visit the site to assess the impact this dwelling now has on the local street scene.

*NB: - the text in italics are direct extracts from the Planning and Design Statement*