

66, Lancaster Drive  
East Grinstead  
West Sussex  
RH19 3XH  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025

Mid-Sussex District Council  
Assistant Director Planning and Sustainable Economy  
Oaklands Road  
Hayward Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 1SS  
FAO Ms Anne Biggs/Ms Anna Tidey

**Notification of Planning Application**  
**68 Lancaster Drive, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3XH**  
**Planning Application No: DM/25/0824**

Dear Ms Biggs and Ms Tidey,

**Scale and Proximity**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our response to the above planning application, associated with 68 Lancaster Drive. We were totally shocked to receive this notification, as our new neighbours hadn't made any mention of it to us, since they moved in last autumn. There appears to be no other property on the estate which has a two-storey extension right up to the boundary line and within 142cm of their neighbour's back door (with the distance between eaves being even closer), nor that has required access to their neighbour's property to place scaffolding to erect such an extension. It would appear that an extension of this size is simply too large for the plot of land and will be very imposing, especially as their house is set forward from ours already. If permission is to be given for this, it will doubtless set a precedent for others to follow and change the character of the road.

**Current Land Use**

We were especially alarmed that the plans comprise, of a narrow strip of land, 54cm wide by 404cm long, adjacent to the side of No 68's garage, which for over 52 years has been undisputedly incorporated into our back path, ever since the houses were built in 1973. Since that time we have covered this area with brick paving in keeping with our surrounding paths, with no objections from the three previous owners. We also have a low ornamental, retaining wall that crosses the front end of the strip and continues across our front garden. Additionally, there is a trellis attached to the wall, covered in established climbing roses which were planted to conceal two unsightly metering cabinets and condensate drain,

mounted onto the side of No 68 garage. These are not shown on the submitted plans but are shown on our attached plan. If the proposed extension were to be built and these cabinets were to be re-located on a similar wall position, they would overhang the boundary and be inaccessible for meter reading.

This extra 54cm wide strip allowed us many years ago to incorporate a large 500 litre water butt at the side of our house, a small area to store two refuse bins and situate two ornamental planters, one of which has been there for five decades, as seen on the attached photos. In 52 years this arrangement has never been challenged. No 68 also has the identical strip of land, adjacent to No 70, to put their dustbins behind a taller retaining wall and covered in tall screening plants. This is the general layout for houses like ours on the estate.

### **Structural Concerns**

There is also a manhole cover extending from our path up to the area in question, shown on our attached plan, which would obstruct footings of sufficient size to support a two-storey extension. Consequently, these additional footings would encroach onto our land which we believe contravenes the deeds to our property. All these proposals would necessitate our path, adjacent to the strip, which has been relayed with expensive drive pavers to be dug up and disposed of, as well as part of the ornamental, retaining wall which had been in place for many years. The trellis would have to be re-positioned and the established roses would need to be removed. Additionally, part of the hedge planted along our border would need to be removed for extension foundations which would encroach across the border, preventing any replanting there. This proposed plan totally disregards our enjoyment of all the work we've done in this area over the past 52 years.

### **Health and Safety**

Since the present owners moved in last autumn, a new condensing boiler has been installed and the exhaust outlet is positioned on their present garage wall, **virtually in line with the air vent on our wall**. Presumably, the intention would be to move it into a similar position on the new garage wall, however this is not indicated on their plans, but can be seen on our submitted plans. This would contravene Building Regulations which specify that such an outlet should be at least 300/600mm distance from the boundary. As I'm registered as immuno-suppressed, having had Stage 4 Lymphatic Cancer which destroyed my adrenal glands, I'm concerned about the impact the emission of combustion gases, being so close to our windows, will have on my health.

### **Drainage Issues**

In order to carry out these proposals, permission to use our back path would presumably be required. However, this presents us with huge concerns. When the second owners of No 68, had the ground floor extension built, we believe that they

were under the impression, that it was exempt from Planning Permission. In view of this it might be assumed that the current foundations are insufficiently adequate for a second storey to be added. If no Building Control was involved then this may be the case and there will be a need to reinforce and extend the footings which will undermine and destabilize our costly brick path. More importantly, however, a party wall agreement will be required, as excavations will be within 3m of our property. This would result in significant disruption for some considerable length of time. The noise, dirt, mud and general building equipment would be intolerable and cause the path to be unavailable to ourselves.

Additionally, we are convinced that the drainage of rainwater failed to be properly installed or inspected by Building Control. This assumption is from the fact that water from the extension roof is discharged along the gutter into a water butt on the recently removed decking and not into the available land water drainage pipes.

### ***Historical Drainage Issues***

*The present owners are likely to be unaware of the horrendous events we endured, which were caused by this failure to meet adequate rainwater drainage standards when the ground floor extension was erected and we believe still exists. Additionally, the third owner of No 68 was unaware that the down-water pipe through the garage roof was blocked and discharging along our back path during the following storms described below.*

*The blocked drain on the existing garage roof and the ground floor extension caused significant damage, after the 2<sup>nd</sup> owners had moved in 2020, when Storm Dennis and Storm Ciara hit. The rain simply poured off the roofs, creating a significant waterfall and river along the footpath and down the steps into the garden. This damaged the fence, our shed and finally caused a huge landslide at the bottom of our garden, up-rooting five very tall conifers, a boundary brick wall and fence, belonging to No 68 and taking our retaining wall and a huge amount of earth in its wake.*

*Council Drainage Inspectors who came to inspect, can confirm this.*

*Video evidence of is also attached in an emailed copy of this submission. It has taken us five years, with more to do, and at a cost of over £35,000, to ourselves in an attempt to rectify the damage caused and regain our garden to some extent.*

*The heavy wet soil is continuing to undermine the adjoining wall with No 68, as the third neighbour was in no financial position to rectify further erosion of the foundations on their side. However, according to the title deeds No68 is responsible for the upkeep of this boundary. At present it is simply partitioned off, but we fear it may collapse again if the foundations are not re-inforced soon.*

### **Scaffolding**

Another serious reservation is the positioning of scaffolding which we assume they would need to erect on our pathway, as the planned extension is on the boundary line. This would mean that we wouldn't be able to lock our gate to secure our property when we are away or even on a day-to-day basis. We had an attempted break-in last summer so this would be unacceptable. The noise, dirt and general paraphernalia, as mentioned before, would be intolerable as we are retired and therefore at home most of the time. We are in our late seventies and it would be dangerous for us to use our back door as my wife has had three serious falls in the last 18 months requiring ongoing hospital treatment. Furthermore, we are planning and await a start date from our builder to have much needed steps built at the bottom of our garden, where the landslide washed away the previous steps. This would require unobstructed access for wheelbarrows, cement mixer and building materials, etc.

### **Loss of Light**

The proposed extension will inevitably reduce the light along the path to our kitchen door and bathroom window which will face on to a very imposing two storey 7.6m high building and pitched roof. It could also potentially reduce the light, to the front of the property, through our kitchen window and bedroom above.

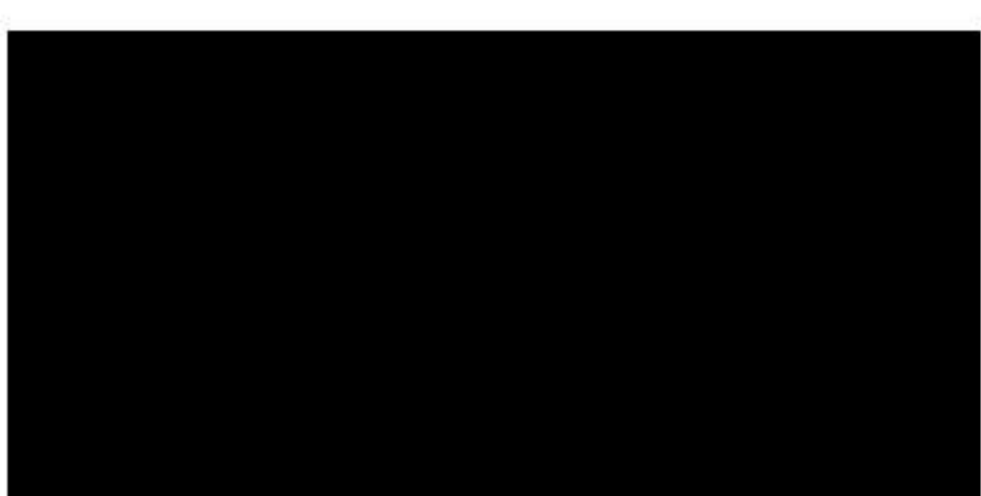
### **Loss of Privacy**

The proposed upstairs bedroom which has French doors and a Juliet balcony will look over our back garden and end the privacy we've enjoyed for the past 52 years.

### **Conclusion**

As mentioned earlier we are now elderly and currently do not enjoy the best of health. In fact I am living with heart failure, caused by chemotherapy treatment, so the added stress of this situation, is far from ideal, very upsetting and would severely disrupt our lives. We respectfully request that this application is refused. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the person writing the letter.

