

PLANNING POLICY – ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

May 2020

Here are some of the arguments that over time have been presented for and against development.

	For development	Against development
Estate design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The houses have been designed with reasonable downstairs accommodation but the 3rd floor bedroom level is restricted. Extending the houses to provide an additional one or two bedrooms would make them more attractive to families with children. Two storey extensions are the same height as the garages. Fourth storey attic extensions could be designed by raising the flat roof 2-3 feet and installing dormer windows, or a full fourth storey facing the rear only, without windows facing the front. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of Lynden Gate is intended to be a similar, coherent design. Lynden Gate has an attractive character which it is in everyone's best interests to maintain. It is a key reason why people choose to live here. Development will damage the character of the estate; differences between the houses or different designs will damage architectural integrity of original design. Development will alter the skyline; block views.
Change of use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the houses is considered beneficial by some owners and should not be restricted by others who do not wish to make similar changes to their own houses. It is desirable for residents with growing families to stay at LG by extending their house rather than having to move elsewhere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We all knew what we were buying. Expected reasonably that it would not change; that is purpose of covenant and LGR's absolute discretion on planning consents. Currently two-thirds of all LG households are of one or two people, while one-third have from three to six people. Extending houses beyond a single room conservatory to allow additional bedrooms changes the use of the house from 2 or 3 bedrooms up to 4 or 5 bedrooms. Alters numbers of occupants; larger families; larger households. If someone wants a 4/5 bed house then these are available in many other developments elsewhere, where they are part of the original design, with appropriate facilities.

<p>Setting precedent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications should be judged against the estate policies as agreed upon from time to time by consensus. • Permitting specific styles of development may help set new precedents. • If those styles are desirable then owners will be content to keep to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting development beyond a single room conservatory will set a precedent. • Concern that future applications will become less willing to conform with style guidelines; will increasingly push the boundaries. • Need for a limit. We have that – the existing limits are appropriate. There is no simple alternative. • If two storeys extensions are permitted then why not three storeys? If fourth storey with dormer roof then why not full fourth storey? If so why not a fourth storey extension? • This will lead to disputes over development applications, with the undesirable prospect of legal proceedings between neighbours.
<p>Internal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People should be allowed to do whatever they want inside their own homes. • It is nobody else’s business what I do with the inside of my house. • Converting the garage or attic from traditional use as a storage space into a living space as an office, gym, playroom, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom is an effective use of space allowing a larger family. • Nobody parks in the garage. • The attic is wasted space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all willingly signed a legal agreement when we bought our houses, with covenants, including not to alter the house without permission. • Changing the use of the houses does have an impact on neighbours. • Converting the garage or attic to living space makes it more likely other rooms eg drawing room will be converted to bedroom. • Creating additional living space encourages larger families and a higher density of residents • Permitting internal changes of use will encourage a massive increase in construction projects, with constant noise and inconvenience to neighbours. • Converting the garage or attic makes it unlikely a future owner will return the space to the current function. • Some households do use the garage for cars; with small electric vehicles this will become more common. • Garages and attics are useful storage spaces.

Disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well organised works do not need to be any more disruptive than a one storey conservatory extension. • In any event the estate is redecorated every few years and we can live with the disruption that this causes. • Owners will keep their builders under control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing developments such as single storey conservatories and internal alterations have already proved to be far more disruptive than planned, over-running by many months, causing considerable strain and leading to bad feeling between neighbours. Larger scale works have to take longer and cause even more disruption. • With best will from owners and best practice from builders works lead to substantial noise, mess, congestion. • Permitting development will lead to multiple projects taking place simultaneously. Several large projects have already been proposed. • There would be a regular flow of work taking place – given that there are 70 houses and a high turnover it could be expected that at any time there would be building works taking place on the estate. • Individual building works interfere with the estate redecoration – which is itself disruptive – adding to difficulties and cost.
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owners would take full responsibility if builders caused any damage and would ensure that it was repaired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to roads and pavements cannot be repaired with exactly matching materials. • Damage to gardens. • Effects of pollution from building materials, including the spread of dirt and dust. • Impact on water table; additional pressure on already heavily loaded sewage system.
Disputes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no need for development to lead to disputes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting development will lead to deterioration in relations between neighbours. There will be arguments among next door neighbours over building noise and disruption. • There will be arguments between developers and Lynden Gate Residents over plans. Inevitably this will lead to legal disputes and court actions.

<p>Finance and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although there is a connection between the number of rooms per dwelling and the call upon resources –the intensity of use per household can depend on quite a number of other factors such as family circumstances, extended periods of absence, permanent residence or company owned house. • The additional costs of redecorating any extension would fall to the individual homeowner. • Owners may be willing to pay additional service charges based on the size of the house. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger houses/households expand total numbers of people on the estate, leading to overcrowding and consuming disproportionate resources. • If development becomes the norm then over time LG could double in size from the current level of 160 people to 300. • Disproportionate use of facilities eg parking. Potentially many 4+ car households. • More call on staff time, more enquiries, more visitors. • Redecoration of houses of differing sizes requires not only additional painting but non-standardised scaffolding. Costs would need to be apportioned. • Service charges would need to be on variable scale according to size of house.
<p>Property Values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensions add value to the individual property. • If we want house values to appreciate here at Lynden Gate we need to be seen as responding to requests for alterations and extensions. • The ability to extend our houses, whether the individual house owner intends to or not, will be a significant contributory factor to increasing house prices across the entire estate. • Precluding any form of building alterations without regard to those which might be suitable and carried out sympathetically would have a significant damaging effect on values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values of the individual properties are primarily driven by the overall attractiveness and desirability of the estate. • Buyers are attracted by the quality of the estate design, uniformity of the houses and gardens, peaceful atmosphere and surroundings, good service and pleasant and neighbourly community. These are the factors which differentiate Lynden Gate from the many other developments which have larger houses. • House prices will be best sustained by maintaining the peaceful character and lifestyle at Lynden Gate. • Differences in design, damage and disruption from works, continual uncertainty over future developments, loss of tranquillity, arguments over future developments and damage to community relations will lead to less attractive estate aesthetically and socially, destroy the original intention and therefore cause long term devaluation of Lynden Gate as a whole.

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