20, Shirley Drive,

Alton,

Stoke-on-Trent,

ST10 4 BB.

4/7/2020.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Reference: SMD/2020/0291; Planning Application by Mr Dodge, in respect of 22, Shirley Drive, Alton.

We are the owners and occupiers of Number 20, Shirley Drive, having lived here since 1978. We have looked very carefully at the details of this Planning Application on-line, and are very concerned about the impact of the proposals on our property, if approval is given. The property subject to the Application is immediately next-door to ours, such that we will be the most affected by any approval. Whilst we understand Mr Dodge's desire, as a recent resident of Shirley Drive, to improve his property, the plans make it clear that aspects of this development have a serious impact upon our privacy and enjoyment of our own home. We would like to make the following points, for serious consideration by the Planning Inspector and the Planning Committee, before any approval is given.

1. The house ground level at number 22 is already approximately 4 feet higher than at our property, which has required some screening by us, on our side of the boundary, to maintain a reasonable degree of privacy. The construction of new windows, 3 in the roof on the north eastern side, directly overlooking number 20, and the large window in their gable, overlooking the rear garden, would significantly reduce the privacy which we have enjoyed for the last 42 years. We will take photographs to better illustrate our concerns, and will send them to you by separate email.
2. We are not clear from the plans on-line to what extent the height of their roof-line will be increased, although the plans do indicate a higher new roof-line, with the present lower level marked by dotted lines. We would ask for clarification, please, as to the proposed increase in height. It seems to us that an already dominant roof-line, much higher than ours at present, will become more dominant, and out of keeping with surrounding properties on both sides of the road, if the roof is heightened significantly.
3. Of especial concern to us is the construction of a large, so-called 'balcony' window overlooking our property in a North Easterly direction. Such a window will give a 'bird's eye' view over our house and gardens, both front and back. We do not think that sufficient thought has been given to the impact upon us, and the loss of privacy over a large part of our property. That is quite apart from another proposed window on the same side of the roof, which also will give a panoramic view over the front of our property. This is obviously a case where our two interests conflict, but we do not understand why it is necessary to have this large window directly overlooking number 20, bearing in mind that there are 3 other roof windows proposed, and a large window in the gable at the rear.

4. Weighing up the balance of interests between us, we feel that our wish to avoid being unnecessarily overlooked, outweighs the need, if any, for a large 'balcony' window, as proposed. The plans do not appear to give dimensions for this 'Velux Cabrio' window, and we would ask that full details are given before consideration of the proposal. But from the description, it appears that the top part can be lifted, and the bottom part dropped, so that a fully grown adult can stand at or beyond the window, in effect treating it as a viewing platform. The view thus afforded includes a 180 degree view across our house and garden, front and rear. This does mean a significant undermining of our privacy, and potentially inhibits the enjoyment of our garden, back and front. We would therefore ask, please, that that part of the proposed development is refused. Although a large tree at the rear of Number 22 gives us some privacy in the back garden, we understand from Mr Dodge that the tree will be removed to make way for a down-stairs extension.
5. We would also ask that if approval is given for the smaller window nearer the road, that the glass should be opaque in nature.
6. We have some reservations about the proposed increase in height of the roof-line at number 22, and would ask for specific dimensions to be provided to us so that we can re-consider the impact upon this part of Shirley Drive, and make further representations, if appropriate.
7. The extent to which these proposals will be detrimental to our enjoyment of the house and gardens at number 20 are not easily explained by words alone; we would therefore ask that before any decision is taken by SMDC, the Planning Inspector with conduct of the application, and any District Councillors involved, visit 20 and 22 Shirley Drive, to speak to all interested parties, and to see for themselves the likely impact which the development would have on our property, and on the immediate surrounding area.
8. We would be grateful if the Planning Team could confirm receipt of this letter, and that it will be produced to the Inspector and District Councillors who will decide the final outcome. We would also like to attend the meeting at which this Application will be considered, and would be grateful for notification of the time, date, and venue.

Yours faithfully,

Peter and Valerie Rank.