Application No.: ADC/0502/07 **Recommendation – Permit Application**

Site: **32 Roberts Road, Lancing, West Sussex**

Proposal: **Extension & Conversion into 2 x Flats**

The Application

The site contains a flat roofed, single storey commercial building attached to the end of a row of double storey terrace houses a number of which have rooms in the roof. Located on the southern side of Roberts Road the building is currently vacant with the last occupier being a gas boiler company who used the building for offices and storage.

The existing building is slightly longer than the attached terraces in that it projects a further 1m to the rear of those dwellings. At the end of the rear garden is a separate storage building and a small paved yard. A pedestrian access leg runs along the western boundary of the site servicing the rear of a row of terrace house that orientate towards the nearby South Street. To the front of the existing building is a small forecourt enclosed by a low wall. At present there is no off-street parking available to the site.

In July 2007 Council refused an application to:

- Add a first floor onto the existing single storey building with a pitched roof at the front (contiguous with the attached houses), and a flat roof at the rear; then
- Divide the enlarged building into 3 self contained residential units (a 1 x bedroom maisonette, a 2 x bedroom maisonette, and a 1 x bedroom ground floor flat), each with access from the side of the building via the adjoining pedestrian access leg.

The grounds for refusal related to the size and potential overbearing nature of the first floor extension, and inadequate parking provision for the proposed intensification of use.

The application now submitted represents a modified version of that previous application, the most notable changes being:

- A reduction in the size of the extensions, such that the first floor addition simply matches that of the adjoining terrace; &
- A reduction in the number of residential units to 2 (being a 2 x bedroom ground floor flat and a 2 x bedroom maisonette).

The access and car parking arrangement has not been altered with entry to the units coming from the adjoining pedestrian access leg, a total of one on-site parking space being provided at the front of the building, and cycle parking and a bin storage area being provided in the existing brick outbuilding at the end of the garden.

The western end of Roberts Road consists of typically double storey Victorian terrace home development setback in a consistent manner from the highway and relatively uniform in its use of building materials. Commercial tenancies utilise the ground floor of the buildings located at the junction of South Street,

with Roberts Road commonly being used for parking by the patrons of those operations.

Consultations and Representations

County Transport Planning Services

Whilst they acknowledge that the application will result in an additional residential unit and thus a likely increased demand for on-street car parking, County Highways do not object to the proposal due to the site being easily accessible via alternative means of transportation.

In accordance with PPG13 however, they request that in exchange for the acceptance of a development well below the adopted maximum standard, a contribution of £1,755 be paid as a TAD contribution towards the upgrade of local transportation routes.

Lancing Parish Council

The Lancing Parish Council has raised no objection to the proposal.

Director of Services

The Environmental Health branch has raised no objection to the proposal.

Third Parties

Two submissions have been received from nearby occupants. One is from a nearby business advising of no objection to the proposal but recommending that additional parking be provided (due to existing problems in the area). The second is from No. 3 Roberts Road (diagonally opposite the site) objecting to the proposal based on insufficient parking, visual amenity and perceived impacts on privacy.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance:

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plans 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005):

LOC 1, NE 1, NE 2, DEV 1, DEV 4, DEV 5

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996):

AG1, AH1, AH2, AH9, AT12 & Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions'

PPG13 'Transport' (DTLR 2001)

Planning Assessment:

Policies

The site has been used as commercial offices and stores for many years, although at present the premises are vacant and un-let.

The proposed change of use from "B1 - Business" to "C3 – Dwelling Houses" is consistent with the Local Plan which identifies the site within the "Built-Up Area" of Lancing, adjacent to the "Business / Shopping Area" of the Lancing Town Centre.

Policy AH2 of the Local Plan encourages redevelopment within the built up area providing that the site is not allocated for another purpose, and subject to the development having an appropriate appearance, scale and character, respects the natural site features and existing residential amenity, and provides adequate access and parking arrangements in accordance with Council's adopted development standards.

Visual Amenity

By attaching to the east side of the end terrace the proposal will complete the existing row of houses and mask a tall existing flank wall which is extremely prominent in the streetscene when approaching Roberts Road from South Street. The proposal is therefore considered to have a beneficial impact in terms of the general appearance of the streetscene.

Residential Amenity

The reduced size of the first floor extension no longer protrudes past the adjoining building and the former roof terrace has now been removed. As a result the proposal will no longer be overbearing or result in any additional impact on adjoining No.30 Roberts Road with respect to either overshadowing or a loss of privacy.

The side windows in the western elevation of the building have the potential to overlook the rear garden of the terrace homes fronting South Street, however a condition requiring them to be fixed and opaque will ensure that no invasion on privacy occurs. As the windows in question are secondary in nature (being for a bathroom, a landing and the second and smallest window of a living room), this should not be problematic and is preferred as opposed to the alternative of removing the windows altogether and replacing it with another blank flank wall.

The proposed front dormer is similar to others that exist in the same row of terraces. Its relationship to development on the opposite side of the road is also consistent with existing development (approximately 15m), which is common for urban development within immediate proximity to a Town Centre. Accordingly, the concerns expressed by the owners of No.3 Roberts Road relating to overlooking and overshadowing are not shared in this instance.

The living environment that would be created in the units is considered acceptable and the room sizes accord with the requirements of Development Control Standard No.4 (Flat Conversions).

Access & Parking

Having regard to the sustainable location of the site on the edge of the Lancing Town Centre, its immediate proximity to alternative modes of transportation, and County Highways qualified support for the proposal, the proposed access and parking arrangements for the development are considered acceptable.

With regard to the concerns raised by third parties about a lack of on-site car parking, it is considered that the proposed use is likely to generate less traffic than a continuation of the existing authorised commercial use of the premises. For instance the previous occupants of the site were a boiler company that had vans constantly arriving at the premises to load/unload throughout the day and were forced to do so within the highway reservation due to a lack of any on-site parking.

Furthermore, the reduction in the number of units (as compared to the previous application) is considered to have brought the level of demand down to an acceptable level.

Conclusion

The proposed use of this site on the edge of the Lancing Town Centre for residential use is considered acceptable. In particular, the proposal would meet a housing need for smaller homes within an accessible location and is consistent with current Government guidance in PPS3 and PPG13 to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive residential development.

Recommendation:

Subject to completion of a Section 106 Obligation requiring payment of £1,755 to sustainable transport improvements, APPROVE for reason that :-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and would help meet the need for additional housing without detracting from the existing local urban environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH1-2, AH5, AT12) and the West Sussex Structure Plan (LOC1, NE1-2, CH1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5).

1. C1Ci (standard time limit)
2. C14Aii (amended plans) (5th October 2007)
3. C12Ei (match external materials)
4. C18Civ (windows opaque & fixed shut) (western elevation)
5. C8Bi (construction and retention of car and cycle parking spaces)

Case Officer.....D. Reynolds..... Date..17/9/07.

Planning Services Manager.....[signature]..... Date..17/9/07.

Planning & Regulatory Committee Chairman..A. F. Mills.. Date...17.09.07.