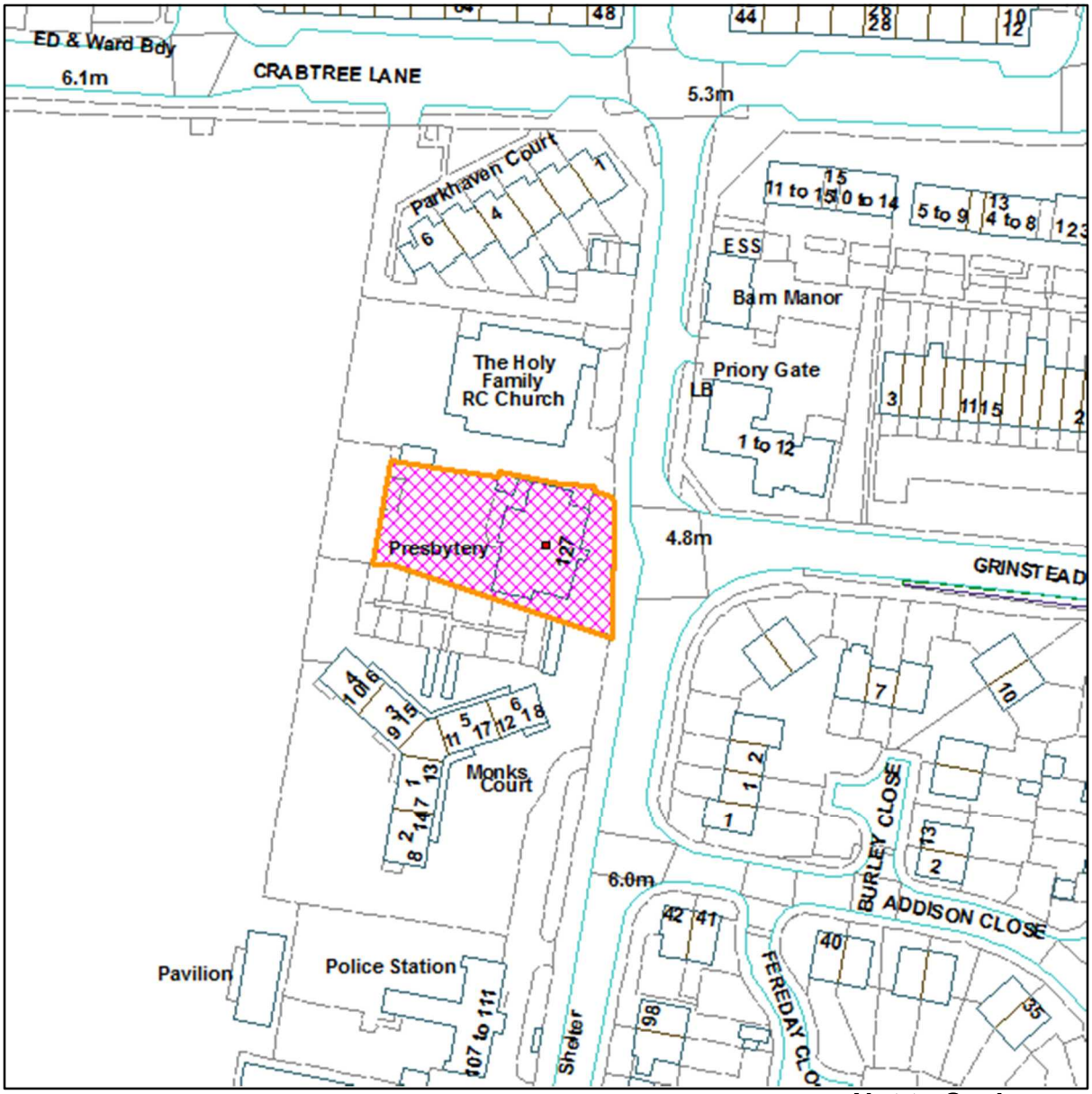
Application Number:	**AWDM/1032/22**	**Recommendation - Approve**
Site:	**Monks Farm Presbytery, 127 North Road, Lancing**	
Proposal:	**Change of use of former Presbytery to six flats with 6no. parking spaces**	
Applicant:	TJH Partners	Ward: Mash Barn
Agent:	Mohsin Cooper	
Case Officer:	Peter Barnett	

Application Number:	**AWDM/1033/22**	**Recommendation - Grant Consent**
Site:	**Monks Farm Presbytery, 127 North Road, Lancing**	
Proposal:	**Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations involving removal and insertion of internal walls and doors, new windows and external doors, and demolition of non historic rear extension in connection with change of use of former Presbytery to six flats with 6no. parking spaces**	
Applicant:	TJH Partners	Ward: Mash Barn
Agent:	Mohsin Cooper	
Case Officer:	Peter Barnett	



Not to Scale

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Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The site is occupied by a Grade II listed building known as Monks Presbytery and was originally used as accommodation for the local priest. It has more recently been used as Parish offices on the ground floor with accommodation above, used by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. It has been closed since March 2020.

The site is abutted to the north by the Church of the Holy Family. To the south are 3 storey flats in a Y-shaped building known as Monks Court. The site faces the mini roundabout junction with Grinstead Avenue to the east, where there are 3 storey flats in Priory Gate to the north of the road and 2 storey houses in Burley Close to the south. The site backs onto the Monks Recreation Ground to the west.

Full planning permission and Listed Building Consent is sought, as amended, for the

change of use and conversion of the building to 6no. flats, comprising 3 x 1 bedroom flats and 3 x 2 bedroom flats on two floors. 6 no. car parking spaces are to be provided at the rear, accessed through the Church car park to the north.

The application originally proposed accommodation within the roofspace but this has been removed following advice from Officers. Further assessment of the historic fabric of the building has also been provided following concerns from Officers that the initial submission lacked detail and justification. As a result, the proposals have been amended to reduce the level of harm to the historic character of the building.

The building has been extended and altered over the years and there is a modern, flat-roofed extension to the hall at the rear and an unsympathetic smaller toilet extension with canopy roof. It is proposed to remove this latter extension. The fake shutters at the front of the building are also to be removed together with various minor features such as an aerial, pipes and meter cupboards.

The building has recently suffered damage while it sits empty and its appearance has deteriorated.

The application is supported by a Planning Statement, a Design and Heritage Report, a Heritage Impact Statement, a Preliminary Ecological Assessment, a Transport Statement, a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

This report covers the applications for both planning permission and Listed Building Consent.

Relevant Planning History

Various applications relating to previous extensions and alterations but no planning history relating to a change of use of the building.

Consultations - in relation to planning application

West Sussex County Council: No objection from a transport/highways aspect subject to conditions to secure car and cycle parking.
Comments:
Access and Visibility The applicant proposes to retain the existing access, with no alterations to this arrangement proposed. From inspection of the visibility splay plan and WSCC mapping, there are no visibility concerns with the existing point of access on North Road.
Capacity The Transport Statement includes trip generation data from the TRICS Database. The data indicates that the proposed development would result in a net decrease of nine vehicular movements per day. As such, the proposed development is not anticipated to give rise to a material intensification of use of the vehicular access when compared with that of the existing use.
Parking and Turning The applicant proposes seven car parking spaces for this development. From inspection of the plans, the proposed parking bays are suitably sized and on-site turning has been demonstrated for both a private car and a refuse vehicle via swept path tracking. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that a development of this size and location would require eight car parking spaces.

From inspection of the plans, there appears to be room for an eighth car parking space, although the LHA does not anticipate that a shortfall of one parking space would give rise to a highway safety issue, owing to the site's sustainable location. If the development is being built under the old Building Control regulations, in place prior to June 15th 2022 it may be appropriate to secure EV charging provision through the planning process.
Cycle parking The applicant has demonstrated secure cycle parking provision to the rear of the site, in accordance with WSCC Parking Standards.
Sustainability The site is situated in a sustainable location within walking/cycle distance of local services and amenities. Cycling is a viable option in the area. The site is also well connected by public transport, with regular bus services available from nearby bus stops on North Road. Lancing Train Station is located approximately 500m south of the site.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The ***Environmental Health*** **(Private Sector Housing)** officer states that there are multiple inner rooms in the ground floor flats, but the applicant has indicated that fire egress windows will be fitted to mitigate the risks in said rooms.

The ***Environmental Health (Public Health) Officer*** has no objections.

The ***Engineer:*** **Original comments**: Flood risk- The application is within flood zone 1, but is shown to be at risk from surface water flooding. The flood risk assessment submitted details that it is proposed to provide an overland flow route around the building to ensure reduce risk of flooding to the dwellings. Sleeping accommodation is proposed on the ground floor. We would like to see further information on this regarding existing and proposed levels around the building, and current threshold levels. We wish to place a holding objection- request for further information on this application. Please re-consult us once details of existing and proposed levels have been provided.
Surface water drainage- the application is for a change of use but includes an increase in hardstanding to provide the parking spaces. The drainage strategy states that these are to be formed of permeable paving, we would require this to be conditioned to ensure compliance.

Second Consultation: The potential flood depths for the 1 in 1000 year event, which is considered to be an adequate substitute for a future 1 in 100 year event, predict flooding of up to 300mm depth adjacent to the building. The topographic survey indicates thresholds may be very low for the building, internal flooding is therefore a risk here. The low flow route proposed is not supported by ourselves as it may increase off site flood risk. The low patio wall does not serve a flood risk purpose, its construction would unlikely contain water and there are gaps in the wall. We would recommend the applicant considers flood resilience and resistance measures to the building to minimise the likelihood of internal flooding and the impact of it.

Third Consultation: Flood risk- The additional information states some flood resilience, however the final details must reflect these statements.
Surface water drainage- the application is for a change of use but includes an increase in hardstanding to provide the parking spaces. The drainage strategy states that these are to be formed of permeable paving, we would require this to be conditioned to ensure compliance.

The ***Trees and Landscape*** Officer considers that the most important trees at the site are being retained and that there is sufficient protection for the retained trees both during and after the proposed works.

Planning Policy: The application concerns a Presbytery which is defined as a community facility for the purpose of Policy 33: Sustainable Communities in the Adur Local Plan (2017). The proposed development will result in the loss of the community facility. Policy 33 seeks to safeguard existing community facilities unless the application can demonstrate that it meets one of the three exceptions as listed in the policy (see bullet points).

The submitted Planning Statement* (p.10) states that the building has been marketed for disposal and that the parish wishes to build a smaller and more modern facility at the rear of the retained church for parish meetings and office facilities. That space will also be made available to the local area as a community facility. The proceeds from the sale of the property will assist in funding this replacement facility.

Whilst the statement makes reference to marketing, no details / evidence of this exercise has been supplied with the application. However, with regards to the proposed provision of a replacement facility, it is considered that on this basis, the third bullet point of Policy 33 is complied with and thus the loss of the church hall is considered acceptable in principle.

Southern Water: Standard advice given

Adur District Conservation Advisory Group: No comments received

Lancing Parish Council: No comment

Consultation - relating to the listed building consent application

The ***Design and Conservation Architect*** has no objections to the application following the receipt of additional heritage information, further exploratory work of the historic fabric and the submission of amended plans and detailed design features.

Representations

1 comment received on the original plans:

I am concerned about the inclusion of an attic flat. Difficult to exit in case of fire, and claustrophobic with very little headroom in most places. Otherwise good.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 28, 33, 34, 36
'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.1 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats'
Sustainable Energy SPD (August 2019)
Adur Planning and Climate Change Checklist (June 2021)
Lancing Vision 2012
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (DCLG 2015)

Relevant Legislation

The Committee should consider the planning application in accordance with:

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Regard shall be given to relevant development plan policies, any relevant local finance considerations, and other material considerations; and

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that requires the decision to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Committee should also consider the application in accordance with Sections 16 and 66 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) that provides the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Special regard shall be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Planning Assessment

Principle and loss of community facility

Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan seeks to protect community facilities and states:

"*The Council will protect, and support improvements to, social and community facilities. Development which would result in the loss of existing social or community facilities will only be permitted where:*
It can be demonstrated there is no demand for the facility within the area and the premises have been marketed for a reasonable period of time; or
There is alternative provision available locally that is accessible, and at least equivalent in terms of quality; or
The proposed development would provide an alternative social and community facility."

In this case, the applicants have argued that the cost of upkeep of the building for community use is prohibitive. Alternative community facilities are proposed at the rear of the adjacent Church and proceeds from the sale of the Presbytery will help fund a

new extension for this purpose.

The building is therefore no longer considered to be fit for purpose and, with replacement facilities proposed, the loss of the community use on the ground floor is considered to be acceptable, particularly as the application proposes to restore the building in a sympathetic manner and put it to a viable alternative use which will contribute toward the District's housing needs.

Heritage Impact

The original submission was not considered to be sympathetic to the historic character or fabric of the listed building. An additional flat was proposed in the roofspace which would have resulted in a large number of rooflights and harm to the roof structure, as well as being rather cramped and substandard accommodation. Other works included the removal of historic walls without any justification or understanding of the original plan form. Externally, the proposed car parking layout and fences at the rear were also considered to be unacceptable due to their close proximity to the building.

Following discussions with Officers and further survey work, a revised Heritage Statement and amended plans were received which are considered to be much more sympathetic to the building and its setting. Details of fire safety upgrades, sound resistance upgrades, ventilation and waste disposal have all been provided to the satisfaction of the Council's Design and Conservation Architect.

The amount of internal subdivision has been reduced, removing unnecessary corridors and partitions. Where a bathroom partition is required, these are shown with a high level glazing detail which allows the room to be understood, and also permits a level of natural light to enter these areas.

On the ground floor a corridor wall at the front of the building is to be demolished to enable a proposed bedroom in that area to gain natural light from the front window. Investigations of the wall show that it is a continuous brick structure of lesser importance and its removal can be justified. A 'downstand' will be provided to the ceiling to indicate where the wall used to be.

The works to the rear of the ground floor have no impact on the historic part of the building and will result in an enhancement over what is there currently.

Works to the first floor are also considered to be sympathetic while, within the loft, the fire safety requirements of the building regulations require the loft void to be subdivided along the compartment lines between flats of the floor below. An automatic opening vent will be continued up to the roof to facilitate smoke ventilation, in an emergency, and this is shown as a conservation-style rooflight on the rear roofslope where it will have less impact on the appearance of the building.

The removal of the fake shutters at the front of the building as well as other services and cables, will help to improve the facade of the building in this prominent location. On the south elevation, an existing non-original UPVC window at the ground floor level adjacent to the hall entrance will be removed and the wall in this location reconfigured to allow for the installation of a new independent entrance door for flat 2, which is considered to be an acceptable improvement.

The existing sash windows on the building already have double glazing but will be replaced with more acceptable slim profile double glazed units, final details of which can be reserved by condition.

There is a basement to the building which does not form part of the proposals. The existing access hatch to the basement has been incorporated into Flat 3, which the basement is entirely below. It has been partially flooded for some time and further investigation work is required to find a solution to the existing standing water and why the previous tanking works have failed. This can be the subject of a condition.

At the rear, the proposed car parking has been moved to the rear of the garden, further from the building and more sympathetic landscape works are proposed, including retention and repair of existing flint wall at the rear of the existing patio area, a new garden wall between garden areas, new paved areas and lawn/planting. It is proposed that the ground floor flats only will have use of the garden area.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal is a sympathetic conversion which will not harm the historic character or fabric of the building. Furthermore, there will be improvements through the removal of the unsympathetic toilet block and shutters and the replacement of UPVC windows and doors with new units that better complement the original building. It is considered that the layout to provide 6 flats is a successful re-use of the building and that the heritage impact is acceptable.

Residential amenity - for proposed dwellings

The proposed flats all meet the nationally described space standards. Flats 1-4 on the ground floor are:

Flat 1 - 2 bed 3 person flat 66m2 (minimum standard 61m2)
Flat 2 - 1 bed, 2 person flat 53.5m2 (minimum standard 50m2)
Flat 3 - 1 bed 1 person flat 42.7m2 (minimum standard 39m2)
Flat 4 - 1 bed 1 person flat 42.1m2

Flats 5 and 6 on the first floor are 2 bed, 3 person flats of 66 and 75m2 which also exceeds the minimum standard.

There was some concern about the position of the shower room to flat 6 in relation to the bedroom of flat 5 on the first floor and possible noise disturbance. However, the applicants have advised that the dividing wall will meet all of the acoustic separation requirements of the building regulations and it is not considered that an objection can be sustained on this basis.

The ground floor flats only will have external amenity space at the rear. However, the building backs onto the Monks Recreation Ground where there is a large open space available for residents to enjoy if desired.

Waste storage is to be provided on the north side of the building within an area screened from the road.

Overall, it is considered that a good standard of accommodation is to be provided.

Trees and Ecology

An arboricultural report submitted with the application states that a total of fourteen individual trees and one hedge will be removed to enable the proposed development, including access to the new parking area at the end of the rear garden. The majority of the trees to be removed are in the C category as they are either considered to be of low quality or easily replaced. One Category B tree will be removed to accommodate the car park but new trees will be planted as part of a landscape scheme for the site, with tree protection measures in place to minimise the impact of the proposed parking area on the retained larger trees at the rear of the site. The Council's Tree Officer is satisfied with the proposals in terms of their impact on trees and the amenity of the area.

A preliminary ecological assessment has also been submitted which has found the site to be of low ecological value. It recommends that further bat survey work is carried out prior to any work being carried out in the loft space. Precautionary measures should also be in place in respect of nesting birds and reptiles and this can be required by condition.

Accessibility and parking

Vehicular access to the development is to be via the Church car park to the north. A small amount of hedging and shrubs is to be removed to form access to the rear of the site where 6 parking spaces are to be provided on the western boundary with a charging point for electric vehicles. Cycle parking is also to be provided in that area, final details of which can be reserved by condition.

The site is in a sustainable location, close to the town centre, bus stops and the railway station. There are no highway concerns with the proposal.

Flood risk and drainage

The site is at low risk of fluvial and tidal flooding but is at risk from surface water flooding. The FRA submitted with the application states that some flood resilience measures are to be provided, along with permeable paving for the parking area. Subject to further details, there are no drainage or flood risk concerns with this development.

Sustainability

There are often difficulties in converting a historic building to include a suite of sustainable and energy efficient measures, compared with a new build development. In this case, the applicants have investigated a thermal upgrade of the building fabric but all of the external walls are lined with historic lath and plaster and it is not therefore possible to improve the thermal performance without causing substantial harm to this fabric. Energy efficient heating by way of solar PVs or Air Source Heat Pumps were also considered but dismissed due to the impact of the plant on the listed building.

The applicants therefore propose to adhere to the Building Regulations, where there are provisions for lower energy efficiency requirements where full compliance would

have unacceptable impacts on the character of a heritage asset.

In the circumstances, this is considered to be acceptable.

Recommendation

AWDM/1032/22

Approve, subject to the following conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Details of permeable paving to be submitted and approved
4. Details of flood resilience measures to be submitted and approved
5. Tree protection to be put in place in accordance with approved Arboricultural Report
6. Landscaping details to be submitted and approved
7. Car and cycle parking to be provided in accordance with details to be submitted and approved
8. Details of new windows and doors to be submitted and approved
9. Recommendations of ecological appraisal to be fully adhered to

AWDM/1033/22

Grant Listed Building Consent subject to:

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard LB Time Limit
3. Protect listed building and damage to be made good
4. Details of new windows and doors to be submitted and approved
5. Details of new joinery and moulding to be submitted and approved
6. Details of proposals to protect basement from water ingress to be submitted and approved
7. Details of work to to be carried out to repair existing flint wall in rear garden