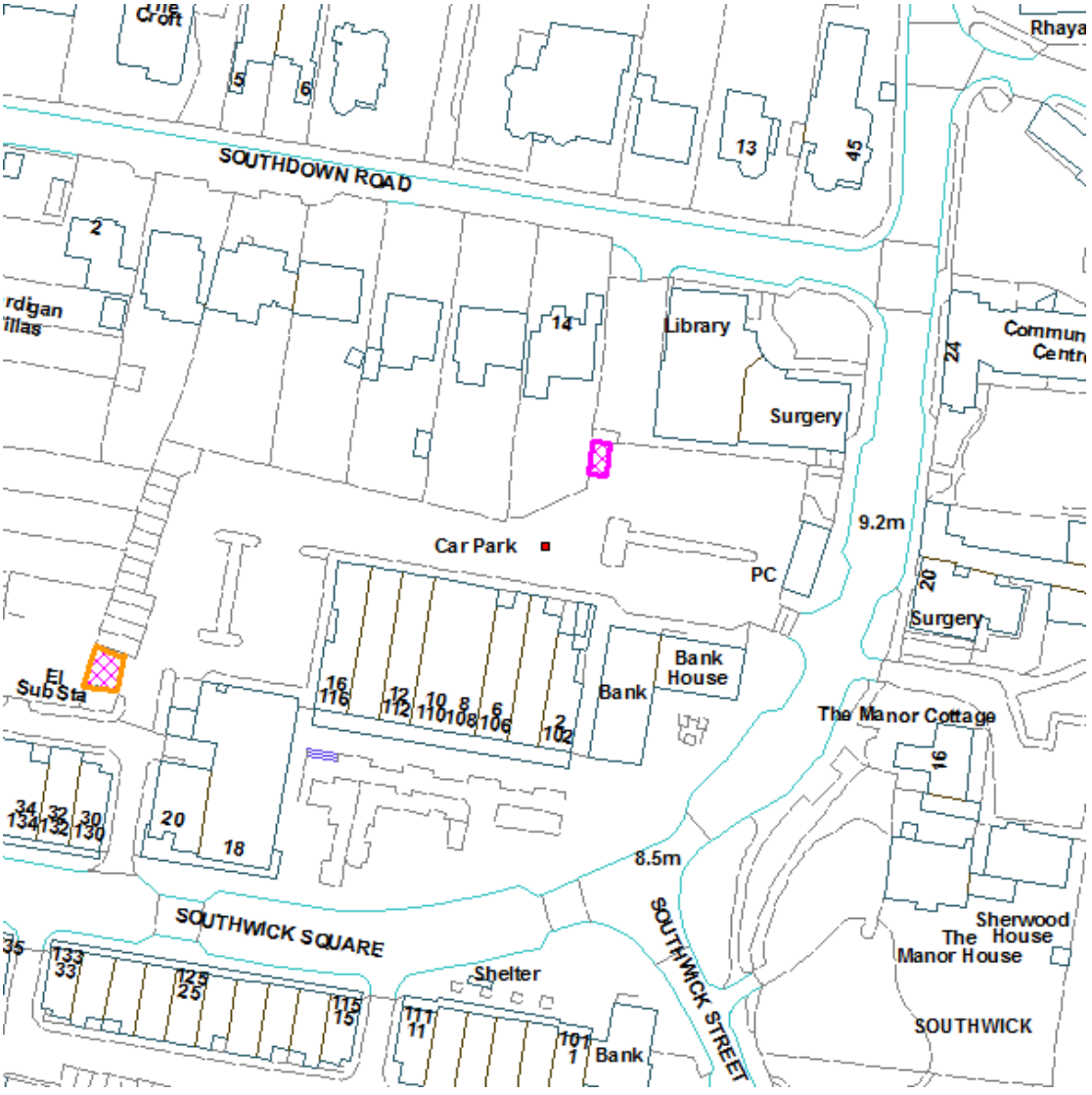
Application Number:	**AWDM/0843/25**	**Recommendation - Approve**
Site:	**Car Park Southwick Square Southwick**	
Proposal:	**Part-retrospective permission for change of use of three parking spaces to create two enclosed refuse storage areas in connection with commercial uses in Southwick Square**	
Applicant:	Adur District Council	Ward: Southwick Green
Agent:	ECE Planning Ltd	
Case Officer:	Peter Barnett	



Not to Scale

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Proposal, Site and Surroundings

This application is for the erection of two bin stores in different parts of Southwick Square Car Park. One of the bin stores (Area 1) has already been installed on the northern boundary adjacent to Southwick Library and the rear garden of 14 Southdown Road and forms part of the lease associated with the Flour Pot Bakery in Bank House. The other (Area 2) is to be installed on the western boundary, adjacent to the access road and garages, where it abuts a private car park and the edge of the Southwick Conservation Area, and is to be for use by other businesses in the Square.

Bin Store Area 1 has been located on a single car parking space. Area 2 is proposed to replace an area which does not form part of the formal car park, but is used for informal parking with space for 2no. vehicles.

The bin stores consist of timber close-boarded fences and gates, 1.9m in height.

The application is brought to Committee as it has been submitted by Adur District Council as owners of the land.

Relevant Planning History

None

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: No objection from a transport/highways aspect. Comments that the proposals will result in the loss of one formal car parking space and two informal car parking spaces. Considering the wider car park has a capacity of 75 car parking spaces, the loss of three car parking spaces would not be considered to give rise to a significant material impact. The site itself is sustainably located that is well accessible on-foot, bicycle or via public transport, so visitors to Southwick Square need not rely on the private car for trips to this area.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The ***Environmental Health*** officer's comments are awaited

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 15, 27
Southwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy (ADC 2009)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

Relevant Legislation

The Committee may grant planning permission for development carried out before the date of the application in accordance with Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Save that the development will have already commenced, this is a conventional planning application, and the Committee should consider the planning circumstances existing at the time of the decision 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.

Planning Assessment

Principle

The Flour Pot Bakery commenced occupation of Bank House in November 2024, and the need for an area to store waste associated with the use was identified. The provision of a bin store within one of the car parking bays was seen as a practical solution given the constraints of the site and in order to avoid unsightly on-street bin provision fronting retail units. This, together with the other bin store, will assist in supporting commercial operations in Southwick Square.

The proposals are therefore considered to contribute positively to the function and vitality of Southwick Town Centre, in accordance with Paragraph 90 of the NPPF which states that "*Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation*." It is also in accordance with policy 27 of the Adur Local Plan which supports town centre uses.

Visual amenity

The bin stores are located within a public car park at the rear of shops in Southwick Square and are not readily visible from the street, although the store at Area 1 can be seen in distant views as one passes the eastern car park entrance off Southwick Street. Both stores are discreetly located, either in a corner of the car park (Area 1) which is screened by existing walls on two sides, or within a recessed area (Area 2) which is screened by an existing wall, fence and garage block on three sides. The bins themselves are screened by the timber fence and gate and it is not considered that adverse visual harm is caused.

The relatively minor nature of the development and its location within an existing large car park also ensures that there will be limited impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area.

Residential amenity

Bin store 2 is some distance from the nearest residential properties to the west, and is separated from them by a private car park. The flats above the businesses in Southwick Square to the south are also a sufficient distance away so as not to be adversely affected.

Bin store 1 abuts the boundary wall of the rear garden of 14 Southdown Road. While the store is not visible from that dwelling due to the boundary wall and fence, there is a potential for noise disturbance and smells as the store is not fully enclosed. However, it is located around 12m from the rear of that house and is adjacent to the end of the garden. It should be noted that there is another existing bin store within the library car park on the other side of the flint wall to the north.

The planning agent has explained that the area would be accessed and serviced within usual commercial opening hours and would not give rise to increased noise disturbance when compared to the lawful use of a public 24 hour car park. It is considered to be sufficient distance away to not cause a loss of amenity. However, in order to protect amenity, it is proposed to restrict use of the bin store to between the hours of 7am-10pm only.

Accessibility and parking

The proposal results in the loss of one parking space within the main car park plus two informal spaces. The existing car park has 75 spaces and the loss of three spaces is not considered to give rise to any significant parking impacts. The site is sustainably located and there are no highway concerns with the proposal.

Recommendation

Approve

Subject to conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit for commencement
3. Bin stores not to be used outside of hours 10pm - 7am