Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1398/19 Recommendation – Approve

Site: Sussex Yacht Club Boat House, Lower Beach Road Shoreham-By-Sea

Proposal: Change of use of the jetty to enable residential occupancy of the 2no. existing boats moored either side of the jetty. (Moorings rear of 5 Riverside Road)

Date of site visit: 12 September 2019

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to two boats moored at a jetty at the end of an access road, off Lower Beach Road, on the south side of the River Adur where the Adur Tidal Wall has been constructed. The site forms part of the intertidal mudflats on the banks of the river but lies outside of the SSSI. There are several existing houseboats immediately to the west. To the east there are workshops and other moorings.

Permission is sought to convert the two existing boats to houseboats for residential occupation. The supporting information submitted with the application states that no new boats or structures would be introduced. The boats measure 21m and 24m long and are low level, single storey height.

The access road has an area of hardstanding at the end, adjacent to the site, which it is proposed to use for parking.

Relevant Planning History

None

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways Authority** has no objection. Comments:

Access and Visibility
The existing access via Lower Beach Road will be utilised for this development. There are no apparent visibility issues at the point of access. An inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last 5 years reveals no recorded injury accidents resulting from road layout within the vicinity of the site. Therefore there is no evidence to suggest the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

The applicant should be aware that residents should not be expected to carry waste more than 30m to a refuse storage point, although this is an amenity issue. Furthermore, a fire appliance should be able to get within 45 m of the site from the highway in order to serve it. Therefore the applicant may have to demonstrate that a fire engine can access and turn on-site.

Parking and Turning
An existing area of hardstanding is to be utilised for parking, with two parking spaces proposed for the site. No details regarding the exact location or dimensions of the parking bays were provided by the applicant. However, there appears to be sufficient space within the area of hardstanding to accommodate at least 2 parking spaces. The proposed parking provision is considered sufficient to meet the demands of the site.

There appears to be room for vehicles to turn on the private lane, allowing vehicles to exit onto the maintained highway in a forward gear. The inclusion of cycle parking provision will encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car.

Adur and Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health** Officer has no objection

Natural England: No objection. Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.

Environment Agency: We are satisfied that our previous objection can be removed, provided that a condition is attached to any planning permission requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved FRA, including signing up to EA flood warning system and an evacuation plan to be submitted and approved.

Marine Management Organisation: Please be aware that any works within the Marine area require a licence from the Marine Management Organisation. It is down to the applicant themselves to take the necessary steps to ascertain whether their works will fall below the Mean High Water Springs mark.

Representations

Letter of objection received from the occupier of 5 Riverside Road:

- Boats have been unofficially used for many years for residential purposes
- Loss of privacy
- Dubious arrangements for dealing with waste and sewage
- Future vessels could be moored there without control and which could be much larger
- Could become Air B and B, holiday lets, etc – no control over future use

- Boats on existing residential moorings are unsightly, rotting, dilapidated – why add to this?

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 3, 11, 15, 31, 34, 35
Adur Houseboats Good Practice Guide (ADC 2021)
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises the provision of two residential units located within the built up area and can be supported in principle. The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers, the effect on the character and appearance of the area and riverside setting, parking and highway safety.

Visual amenity

The proposal does not involve any external or structural changes at this stage. However, it is clear that houseboat owners are likely to want to add small structures or make alterations to their boats over time, as can be seen at the existing houseboats further west. Alterations which materially alter a boat's external appearance, plus the construction of fences, platforms, jetties and sheds may require planning permission.

In the context of the other houseboats in the area, including the much larger 'Shieldsman' immediately to the west, it is not considered that the change of use of these two boats would be harmful to the character and visual amenities of the locality and its riverside setting.

Residential amenity

The boats are close to other houseboats which are moored at the rear of dwellings in Riverside Road. There is a car repair business to the immediate east. There are not considered to be any residential amenity concerns in connection with this proposal.

Parking and Access

The proposed parking area is considered to be sufficient to meet the needs of the houseboats. WSCC Highways have no objection to the proposal, commenting that there appears to be sufficient space within the area of hardstanding to accommodate at least 2 parking spaces which is considered sufficient to meet the demands of the site.

There appears to be room for vehicles to turn on the private lane, allowing vehicles to exit onto the maintained highway in a forward gear. The inclusion of cycle parking provision will encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car. Details of storage sheds and refuse storage can be controlled by condition.

Comments relating to fire appliance access are noted. The new road serving the houseboats is wide enough to enable emergency vehicle access if required.

Ecology
There are no ecology or habitat concerns in respect of this proposal. Pollution through discharge of sewage is a potential concern and advice from the EA is set out in the Council's Houseboat guidance. It is proposed that this be included as an informative.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Details of car parking
4. Details of cycle storage
5. Details of waste storage
6. The development permitted by this planning permission shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (dated September 2019) and the following mitigation measures detailed within the FRA:
   • The owner/occupier should sign up with the Environment Agency Flood Warning system.
   • An evacuation plan made to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority's emergency planners, should be made available to the occupier to ensure safe access and egress routes to non-flooded areas are available in case, for example, power or water supplies are lost which will make the houseboat no longer safe or habitable.
   These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? Y

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 1 December 2022

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 1 December 2022