Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Approve**
AWDM/0967/12

Site: **Car Park Opposite 1 - 3 Ship Street, Shoreham-By-Sea West Sussex**

Proposal: **Two-bedroom house with integral garage (with lounge/kitchen within mansard roof) and front balcony plus new basement level (amendment to planning permission AWDM/0488/11)**

Date of site visit: 15 August 2012 and 7 September 2012

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application is a revised submission following the grant of planning permission for a two-bedroom house with accommodation within a mansard roof on the site in October 2011 (AWDM/0488/11).

The site is located to the rear of the High Street, on the east side of Ship Street, opposite a three-storey flat-roofed 1960s office block at 1-3 Ship Street. It is used as a private car park and was sold by the Council in 2008. Its dimensions are 9m deep and 6m wide. It has an open frontage onto Ship Street and is open to a private access drive on the north side. It is bounded on the south side by a tall brick wall (approximately 4m) which encloses a yard to the rear of the bridal shop at No.62 High Street (which has a maisonette above). To the rear (east) of the site is a similar, but slightly taller, wall which encloses the external yard of the video shop at No.60 High Street (which has some external stairs at the rear to its upper floor flat).

The access alongside the northern boundary of the site provides a vehicular and pedestrian private right of way from Ship Street to the rear of the shops and a row of 3 recently built terraced houses in John Street (nos 5, 5A and 5B). Further to the north is a converted former church and its car park. There is a row of two-storey terraced cottages on the west side of the street, north of the office block.

The latest application is again for a two-bedroom house with a mansard roof but the proposal seeks to amend the internal bedroom layout and relocate the previously-approved balcony from the southern elevation to the western elevation. The mansard roof design is amended to provide a vertical wall on the west elevation rather the mansard form which is retained on the east side. The west elevation is amended to replace the previously approved dormer window within the mansard roof with bi-fold doors and the provision of a glass balcony screen in front of a 1.2m deep balcony. A basement is also now proposed.

The dwelling comprises basement storage, a garage (for 1 car)/utility/store on the ground floor, 2 bedrooms and a bathroom at first floor, with the main living accommodation (lounge and kitchen) within the roof. The external walls are to be rendered with quoin detail. The roof finish is to be slate. The parapet and ridge heights of the dwelling remain as approved at 6.35m and 8.35m respectively.

Relevant site history

ADC/0447/08 – Three storey flat-roofed house – refused and dismissed at appeal

AWDM/0488/11 – Two storey house with accommodation within mansard roof - approved

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: No objection from a transport point of view. Ship Street is a one way street off the main route through Shoreham-by-Sea. One car parking space is being proposed which is considered sufficient for the needs of this proposal. Cycle parking will be included according to the Design and Access Statement; this must be secure and covered.

Based on the submitted information the proposal is unlikely to result in a material increase in traffic movements in this location.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The Environmental Health Officer has no adverse comments. The precautionary contaminated land condition is recommended.

Environment Agency: No comment

Conservation Advisory Group: No objection

Representations

1 letter received from the occupier of 5 John Street stating no objection providing the specified heights of the balcony and roof are adhered to.

1 letter received from the accountants firm occupying 1-3 Ship Street objecting to the application. The proposed balcony would look directly into their offices and would be overbearing and cause loss of privacy, threatening client confidentiality. Building will also cause a loss of light.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AB1, AB4, AB15, AH2, AH5 and Appendix 11 ‘Supplementary Planning Guidance’ comprising:
Development Control Standard No.2 ‘Space Around New Dwellings and Flats’
Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards for New Homes
South East Plan (GOSE 2009): SCT1, SCT5, SP3, CC6, H1-2, H5, BE1, BE6

National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

Planning permission has already been granted for a dwelling of this scale and general form and the principle of residential development is therefore established. The main consideration is therefore the impact of the revised balcony arrangement and elevations, plus the proposed basement, on the surrounding area.

Visual amenity

From the street the dwelling will have a very similar appearance to the approved building. At roof level the amended roof design and balcony are not considered to detract from the Conservation Area or from the appearance of the building. There are fewer openings on the southern elevation but it is not considered that the mass of this elevation will be particularly prominent due to the proximity of existing walls and buildings to the south. From the north the side of the dwelling will be much more visible but there is a reasonable arrangement of windows on this side to break up the elevation.

The scale, form and design of the building is considered appropriate in light of the existing permission and it will improve the street scene and enhance the Conservation Area. The additional basement level will have no impact upon the street scene.

Residential amenity

The issue of external amenity space for the proposed dwelling was considered in detail at the time of the previous application. The balcony at that time was considered to be acceptable in view of its town centre location where many flats have no external amenity space. This position has not changed.

The main impact of siting the balcony on the front (west) elevation of the building is that it will be directly opposite the offices at 1-3 Ship Street at a distance of just 5.5m. The firm occupying those offices has written to object to the proposal on the grounds of overlooking and loss of privacy. While views towards the office windows will clearly be possible, it is not considered that objections on the basis of a loss of privacy to a non residential property have as much weight as if it were a residential property. Furthermore, in a dense urban location such as this, front-to-front separation distances are much smaller than would be expected elsewhere and some mutual overlooking is common. Finally, the balcony is likely to be used at evenings and weekends when the offices are less likely to be occupied. On balance, it is not considered that the position of the balcony will cause significant harm to the users of the offices to justify the refusal of the application on this ground.

The nearest dwelling on the west side of the road to the application site is No.7 Ship Street which is offset to the north. Any views towards that dwelling

would be oblique and it is not considered that any serious loss of privacy would occur.

The impact on the dwellings in John Street to the rear was previously assessed at the time of the last application and it was concluded that there would not be a significant loss of light to those dwellings. This remains the case now. With regard to overlooking, the number of windows facing east has been reduced to just one and it will have only an oblique view towards the rear of John Street, predominantly facing the blank walls at the rear of commercial properties in the High Street.

With regard to the proposed basement, this is shown as being for storage purposes only. No windows or other openings are shown and it is considered that a condition to ensure its use for storage only should be included as it would otherwise provide an inadequate standard of living accommodation.

Accessibility and parking

It was previously accepted that a single parking space was acceptable in this sustainable town centre location. Secure cycle parking is also to be provided within the garage.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and, because it would help meet the need for additional housing and enhance the Conservation Area, it is considered appropriate notwithstanding that the site is within an area identified for shopping (and office) use in the Local Plan. 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, AB4, AH2, AH5, AS1, AE5) and the South East Plan (SCT1, SCT5, H1-2, H5, T4, BE1-2).

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Materials
3. Cycle parking
4. Archaeology
5. Basement to be used for storage only
6. Permission relates to approved plans:

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 14 September 2012

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 17 September 2012