Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0980/14 **Recommendation – Approve**

Site: **Change of use from class C1 (Guest House) to class B1(a) (Office)**

Proposal: **Bella Notte, 117 Brighton Road, Lancing West Sussex, BN15 8HT**

Date of site visit: 29 July 2014

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a guest house (Use Class C1) on the north side of Brighton Road overlooking the Beach Green car park. It is proposed to change the use of the building to an office for local Solicitors (Class B1(a)). The solicitors are currently based in South Street but have been forced to move having been served Notice by their landlord. They wish to stay in the local area to meet the needs of their client base.

The proposed office would be open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday and would employ 10 staff. Parking is provided in the rear yard of the property (3 spaces) and there is potential to provide parking at the front of the property, although this does not form part of the current application.

Relevant site history

L/162/05 – Change of use from dwelling to B&B – approved temporary until October 2007. There is no record of this permission having been renewed.

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Highway Officer has no objection, following receipt of the parking survey and parking strategy, subject to conditions.

Lancing Parish Council: No objections

Representations

4 letters received from the East Lodge Residents Company & the occupiers of 10 and 21 East Lodge and 1 other resident of East Lodge objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- Concerned that area of road to side of site may be formally used for car parking, obstructing right of way and access along East Street and The Terrace and causing highway safety issues and noise.
- The area is already congested
- Applicants should provide more details about car parking proposals.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1
Assessment of Saved Policies (ADC 2013)
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The application will result in the loss of B&B accommodation but there is no specific policy which would prevent this. There are no available premises of a suitable size within the town centre to accommodate the business so there is no objection in principle to this change of use.

Visual amenity

There will be no change to the external appearance of the building as a result of this application.

Residential amenity

The proposed use of the building as an office should not result in noise or disturbance to neighbouring occupiers. The premises will be open during normal office hours and, by its nature, the use should not give rise to activity likely to lead to a loss of residential amenity.

Parking and access

The main concern with regard to this application is over parking. The site fronts Brighton Road but has no vehicular access to that road. There is a pedestrian access along the side of the property from Brighton Road but vehicles access the site from The Terrace and East Street, two roads which form a loop around East Lodge, a block of flats to the east of the site.

Residents of East Lodge are concerned that if vehicles are parked on these streets, they will add to existing congestion and obstruct access to their property. There is an area of highway adjacent to the site that has been used informally as a parking area for guests of the B&B. There are no restrictions to prevent cars parking there.

Nevertheless, the applicants were asked to provide more information about parking and they have submitted a parking survey and a parking strategy in support of their application.

The survey was taken on East Street and Cecil Road to the north and demonstrates that there is adequate capacity on the surrounding road network to accommodate staff and visitor vehicles. The site itself can provide 3 parking spaces in the rear yard and a further 4 at the front (subject to future planning consent). At the rear, parking for the 2 company directors and a disabled visitor space would be provided. An 8 space cycle rack would also be provided. The applicants have stated that only 2 other staff drive to work, usually in the same vehicle. Other staff either cycle or use public transport (there is a bus stop close to the site on Brighton Road). Most clients are local and would be able to walk to the premises. The Beach Green car park would be available for use if necessary.

On this basis, it is not considered that the proposed use would be likely to result in parking problems or a risk to highway safety.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Use limited to B1a only
3. Hours of use
4. Cycle parking
5. Car parking
6. Approved plans

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

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: 10 September 2014

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 11 September 2014