

Expiry: 28/8

Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWD/0766/26

Recommendation – Grant

Site: The Royal British Legion, 9 - 11 Buckingham Road,
Shoreham.

Proposal: Change of use from a private members club (sui generis) to
2no. residential 3 bedroom dwellings (use class C3) with
off-road parking

Date of site visit: 12/8

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

This application relates to two mid terraced vacant properties on the west side of Buckingham Road close to the junction with Queens Place and the train station and opposite the Crabtree Pub. Built as houses the property was used by the Royal British Legion as a club until February 2023. It is not clear when the use began but planning records indicate it began in at least the 1970's. It has been vacant since it closed.

In the terrace to the south is a newsagent with flat over. To the north is a Pilates studio with flat over. No. 17 is a house as are Nos. 21, 23 and 25.

The site is not in a conservation area but the back garden boundary abuts the Shoreham conservation area. It is not a listed building. There are no protected trees on the site.

It sits within the town centre boundary in a secondary shopping parade. There is secondary pedestrian access from a rear alleyway off Queens Place.

Permission is sought to convert the two properties into 2, three bedroom houses. This involves demolition of single storey rear extensions to both properties and a central part of the first floor rear addition. Two parking spaces for each property is shown on their respective forecourts with some soft landscaping. A low wall at the front is to be removed to enable the parking. Windows are to be replaced, and a new front door added to the front of No. 9.

Relevant Planning History

SU/38/82 - Single storey rear extension (Committee/Poppy Room And Store).
Granted

246/79 - Alterations And Extension to first floor rear and use of first floor as
part of clubroom. Granted

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Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Highways Authority

WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been consulted on highway matters by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the proposed change of use from private members club (sui generis) to two three-bedroom residential dwellings (Use Class C3) with off-road parking. The site is located on Buckingham Road, a C-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

Vehicle access arrangements are to remain as existing from Buckingham Road. From inspection of WSCC mapping, there are no apparent visibility concerns with the existing point of access on Buckingham Road. In addition, the proposed change of use to residential is not anticipated to give rise to a material intensification of use.

Regarding parking, two existing off-street car parking spaces are to be retained. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that two three-bedroom dwellings in this location would require four car parking spaces. Consequently, any overspill parking would have to be accommodated on-street. Whilst the LHA does not anticipate that the shortfall in parking would give rise to a highway safety concern, the LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts on on-street parking from an amenity point of view.

The site is located in a sustainable location being within walking/cycle distance of local services, amenities and public transport connections. Cycling is a viable option in the area, and the LHA would request that secure and covered cycle parking provision for at least two bicycles be provided for each of the proposed dwellings in accordance with WSCC Parking Standards.

In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

If the LPA are minded to approve the application, the following conditions should be applied:

Cycle parking

No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

WSP: No objection.

Southern Water:

Insufficient Information provided

Condition

Construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of surface water drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

Proposed Soakaways

The Council's Building Control officers or technical staff should be asked to comment on the adequacy of Soakaways to dispose of surface water from the

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proposed development. No new Soakaways should be located within 5 metres of a public or adoptable gravity sewer, rising main or water main.

No Soakaways should be connected to the public surface water sewer.

S106 Connection application

Any new connections to the public sewerage system will require a Section 106 connection application to be submitted and approved by Southern Water Services. To make an application visit Southern Water's Get Connected service: <https://developerservices.southernwater.co.uk> and please read our New Connections Charging Arrangements documents which are available on our website via the following link:

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/developing-building/connection-charging-arrangements>

Please note that, where there are separate systems available, Southern Water will not allow surface water to connect into the public foul sewer. If this is not possible, please provide evidence that all other options have been explored.

It is possible that a sewer now deemed to be public could be crossing the development site. Therefore, should any sewer be found during construction work, an investigation of the sewer will be required to ascertain its ownership before any work commences on site. If this happens, please call our Customer Service Desk on 0330 303 0119

For further advice, please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX (Tel: 0330 303 0119)

Website: southernwater.co.uk or by email at: SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk

Planning Policy

Key Issues / Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 11, 15 and 33

Adur Retail and Town Centres Study 2024

NPPF 2026 Policies S4, HO7, TC2, L2, DP3, TR4 and HC6.

Summary

Planning Policy has no objection to the proposal.

The proposal would result in the permanent loss of a community facility. Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan seeks to protect social and community facilities, but allows their loss where it can be demonstrated that

- there is no demand for the facility and the premises has been marketed for a reasonable period*
- where accessible and at least equivalent alternative provision is available locally; or*

- where an alternative social or community facility would be provided.

The submitted statement confirms that the Royal British Legion premises closed in September 2023 because the trustees could no longer fund the upkeep of the building. The property was marketed from May 2024 through a range of commercial property websites, commercial agents, applicant databases, boards and social media. Some interest was received, including from nurseries and a funeral home, but no commercial offers were made. The agent identifies the level of investment required in the building and its suitability for modern occupiers as barriers to reuse.

The marketing was primarily directed towards commercial occupiers rather than specifically towards community or voluntary organisations and therefore does not provide a perfect fit with the first criterion of Policy 33. However, significant weight should also be given to the more recent national policy. NPPF Policy HC6 states that the loss of a key community facility may be acceptable where there is no reasonable prospect of the use being retained because of insufficient community support or because it is no longer viable or feasible to operate. The specific requirement for at least 12 months' marketing applies to shops and public houses where commercial viability is at issue, rather than to community facilities generally.

Given the circumstances of the closure, the length of time the premises has been vacant, the condition and investment requirements of the building and the subsequent marketing exercise, there is sufficient evidence that there is no reasonable prospect of the former community use being retained at these premises. The loss of the community facility is therefore considered acceptable in this case, notwithstanding that the submitted marketing evidence does not fully reflect the wording of Policy 33. The more recent provisions of NPPF Policy HC6 are an important material consideration in reaching this conclusion.

The site lies within Secondary Frontage Block 1 in Shoreham town centre. Policy 11 identifies a range of commercial and community uses that are acceptable at ground-floor level within this frontage and states that any other uses will be resisted. The proposed residential use therefore conflicts with this element of Policy 11.

There is, however, important more recent evidence. The 2024 Adur Retail and Town Centres Study recognises the need for greater flexibility in town centres and warns against being unduly restrictive about non-retail uses at ground-floor level. It notes that Shoreham's primary and secondary shopping frontages sit entirely within the Primary Shopping Area and concludes that there is "little future purpose" in retaining the existing frontage designations. It recommends removing them and using future policy to manage uses within the Town Centre and Primary Shopping Area instead. The Study is evidence rather than adopted policy and does not displace Policy 11, but it is relevant to the weight to be given to the frontage conflict.

NPPF Policy TC2 also gives substantial weight to the benefits of supporting the vitality and viability of town centres through diversification, intensification

and residential accommodation, although this is expressly qualified where residential development conflicts with development-plan policies for specific locations. In this case, the premises are not currently in retail or Class E use, have been vacant for a considerable period, and there are already residential properties within this part of the frontage. The proposal would therefore not result in the loss of an occupied retail unit or introduce residential use into an otherwise continuous commercial frontage. The actual harm to the vitality and viability of Shoreham town centre arising from the conflict with Policy 11 is considered limited, and therefore this conflict should not prevent approval in this case.

The proposal also provides an opportunity to improve the appearance and functioning of this part of Buckingham Road. The existing building and frontage are run down, with prominent external plant at ground-floor level, while the forecourt and adjoining pavement are currently affected by informal parking. Policy 15 requires development to enhance the local environment and make a positive contribution to the character and sense of place of an area, and specifically seeks opportunities through development to improve the quality and accessibility of public streets and spaces. Policy 11 itself also supports environmental improvements and appropriate parking controls to make Shoreham town centre more pedestrian-friendly and attractive. NPPF Policies DP3 and TR4 similarly support development which enhances its surroundings and minimises conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

Where the submitted scheme secures the removal of the unsightly external plant, improvement of the frontage and an appropriate treatment of the forecourt which addresses the existing informal parking, these should be given positive weight as townscape and public-realm benefits. These matters should be secured through the final design and conditions where necessary.

There is also significant weight in favour of bringing the vacant building back into productive use and providing additional housing. NPPF Policy HO7 requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of homes which contribute towards meeting evidenced accommodation needs, while Policy L2 requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of making better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings. The proposal would provide two additional dwellings in a highly accessible town-centre location.

The council's housing need is not relied upon to justify an otherwise unacceptable loss of a community facility. On balance the loss of the facility is acceptable having regard to the evidence and the more recent provisions of NPPF Policy HC6. The provision of two additional dwellings is then a positive benefit which should be considered alongside the reuse and improvement of a vacant building and the potential townscape and public-realm improvements. Taken together, these benefits are considered to outweigh the limited harm arising from the conflict with the frontage provisions of Policy 11.

Overall, the permanent loss of the community facility is considered acceptable in this case. Although the residential use conflicts with the ground-floor frontage provisions of Policy 11, the harm arising from that conflict is limited and is outweighed by the benefits of bringing a long-vacant building back into

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use, providing two additional homes in a sustainable town-centre location and, where secured by the scheme, improving the appearance of the frontage and the adjoining public realm. Planning Policy therefore has no objection to the proposal.

Representations

11 neighbours notified. No responses received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 2, 11, 15, 20, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34, 36
'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.1 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats'; No.2 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'

Design Bulletin No.1 'Trees and Landscaping' (ADC 1996)

'A Strategy for Shoreham Renaissance' (ADC 2006)

WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (DCLG 2015)

Circular 11/95 'The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions' (DoE 1995)

Planning Assessment

Housing Delivery

An updated version of the NPPF was published on 17th August 2026.

Paragraph 8 of Annex D states that Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites. This should be sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing, assessed against their housing requirement in the development plan, or against their local housing need (calculated using the standard method) where the development plan housing requirement is more than five years old. Paragraph 9 states that the supply of specific deliverable sites should include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

- a. 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
- b. 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply;

or c. For the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a version of the Framework published prior to December 2024, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date up-to-date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out above.

Annex D also refers to the Housing Delivery Test, and makes clear that where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local

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planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences apply:

- a. Where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in the future;
- b. Where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, a buffer of 20% should be added to the identified supply of specific deliverable sites. This is in addition to the requirement for an action plan;
- c. Where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, an evidenced unmet need for housing is deemed to exist for the purpose of applying policy S5(1)(j) in this Framework. This is in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

The Adur Local Plan was adopted on 14th December 2017. Policy 3: Housing Provision makes provision for a minimum of 3,718 net additional homes in the period 2011 to 2032, equivalent to 177 dwellings per annum. As Adur District Council adopted its Local Plan more than 5 years ago the Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement uses a housing requirement based on the local housing need that is calculated by the standard methodology set out in the PPG.

Five year Land Supply:

The published land supply figures published in March 2026 using a base date of 1st April 2025 used a Standard Methodology figure of 549 which reflected the situation at that point in time.

This included a 20% buffer. It indicated a land supply figure of 3.2 years.

Housing Delivery Test:

On 17th August 2026 the Government published both the 2024 Housing Delivery Test measurement and 2025 Housing Delivery Test measurement

The 2024 measurement indicated that Adur scored 37% which resulted in a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The 2025 measurement indicated that Adur achieved 48% between 2022/23-2024/25 and therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. A Housing Action Plan will also be prepared.

Loss of Community Facility

The proposal would result in the permanent loss of a community facility. Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan seeks to protect social and community facilities, but allows their loss where it can be demonstrated that

- there is no demand for the facility and the premises has been marketed for a reasonable period
- where accessible and at least equivalent alternative provision is available locally; or
- where an alternative social or community facility would be provided.

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The Royal British Legion closed these premises in September 2023 because the trustees could no longer fund the upkeep of the building. Submitted marketing information shows that it was marketed from May 2024 through a range of commercial property websites, commercial agents, applicant databases, boards and social media. No commercial offers were made.

Although specifically targeted towards a community reuse the marketing does indicate no significant commercial interest.

Newly published NPPF Policy HC6 states that the loss of a key community facility may be acceptable where there is no reasonable prospect of the use being retained because of insufficient community support or because it is no longer viable or feasible to operate. The specific requirement for at least 12 months' marketing applies to shops and public houses where commercial viability is at issue, rather than to community facilities generally.

The agent identifies the level of investment required in the building and its suitability for modern occupiers as barriers to reuse.

It is considered that the submitted information sufficiently demonstrates that there is no reasonable prospect of the former community use being retained at these premises. The loss of the community facility is therefore considered acceptable in this case.

Shopping Policy

The site lies within Secondary Frontage Block 1 in Shoreham town centre. Policy 11 identifies a range of commercial and community uses that are acceptable at ground-floor level within this frontage and states that any other uses will be resisted. The proposed residential use therefore conflicts with this element of Policy 11.

However, there is more recent evidence in the 2024 Adur Retail and Town Centres Study. It recognises the need for greater flexibility in town centres and warns against being unduly restrictive about non-retail uses at ground-floor level (see Planning Policy comments above).

Recently published NPPF Policy TC2 also gives substantial weight to the benefits of supporting the vitality and viability of town centres through diversification, intensification and residential accommodation.

The proposal would not result in the loss of an occupied retail unit or introduce residential use into an otherwise continuous commercial frontage. The actual harm to the vitality and viability of Shoreham town centre is considered limited, and therefore this conflict with Policy 11 should not prevent approval in this case.

Housing Need

Adur cannot meet its 5 year housing supply targets. Newly published NPPF Policy HO7 requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of homes

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which contribute towards meeting evidenced accommodation needs, while Policy L2 requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of making better use of vacant and underutilised land and buildings. The proposal would make good reuse of existing buildings and provide two additional dwellings in a highly accessible town-centre location.

Quality of accommodation

Two, three bedroom houses are proposed. This involves demolition of a rear extension and part of the first floors at the rear to create a lightwell to the proposed third bedroom.

The National Space Standards 2015 require a 3 bedroom, 5 person, house to have a minimum floor area of 93sqm. These units comfortably exceed this at nearer 130sqm. All habitable rooms have natural light and ventilation.

West facing gardens of between 35sqm and 40sqm are to be provided. Given this is a reuse of existing buildings this level of provision can be tolerated. Removing PD rights for ground floor extensions and garden outbuildings is however, considered to be necessary in this case.

Visual amenity

The proposal will improve the appearance of the building with the removal of unsightly air conditioning units. A new front door is proposed for No.9 and replacement windows. The statement says traditional sash windows are proposed and the drawings indicate sash type. Whilst timber sash windows would be desirable this is not a conservation area and so uPVC casements would be acceptable here.

A front wall is to be removed to make way for the parking proposed. It is not clear how the frontage will be divided for each household or whether the frontage is to be resurfaced. A condition requiring details of hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatments is recommended.

Residential amenity

The physical changes to the building will have no impact for neighbours.

Highways

No change to the highway itself is necessary. This is an extremely sustainable location next to the train station and on bus routes. There is a bus stop outside No. 5. Two parking spaces per unit meets the parking requirement for houses of this size.

The LHA would like to see secure covered cycle parking. Rear garden access is available off Queens Place. This is considered sufficient to meet any cycle parking need.

Refuse storage is shown at the front of each house.

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Flood Risk

There is no flood risk associated with this site.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Materials to match existing
4. PD removed
5. Surface water details
6. Hard and soft landscaping details
7. Details of walls and fences
8. Details of CMP
9. Parking provided prior to occupation

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

1. 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.
2. Household SuDS
3. SW connection
4. SW sewer on site

Case Officer:

MOK

Date: 28/8

Authorised by:

Peter Barnett

Date: 2 September 2026