**DELEGATED APPLICATIONS**

**ASSESSMENT SHEET**

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS

WB 11/0096/FULL

99 Clifton Road
Worthing
West Sussex

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Proposed conversion of existing shop/office unit into a studio flat with changes to the front and side elevations

The proposal follows withdrawal of a similar application in January 2011 (WB/10/1044/FULL) as a result of unaddressed concerns over evidence of marketing to justify the loss of office use and the insensitive design of the alerted shopfront.

The shopfront has been amended accordingly and shows the fascia and corner door access retained but the shopfront itself infilled with solid walls and two Victorian sash style windows on each of the corner elevations.

The internal space is laid out with a studio (bed/lounge) in the corner unit and kitchen /WC/bathroom and store at the rear with access to the rear yard via a set of double doors which replace the existing single door. Two cycle storage places are referred to in the Design and Access Statement and application form but none are shown in the submitted drawings .

The application is supported by marketing details.

SITE VISIT

4.4.11

NEIGHBOURS CHECKED : Y / ~~N~~

ADDITIONAL NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS (LIST ADDRESSES):

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The property is sited on the corner of Clifton Road and Anglesea Street, close to Worthing station and to the South Farm Road neighbourhood shopping centre, in the town centre fringe area and provides some 53 sq metres of floorspace . Two storey, terraced housing adjoins to the north and south and

opposite (east), much of which is converted to flats. A scouts hall abuts the site to the west.

The application property is an attractive Victorian 2 storey corner, terrace building with a small and enclosed yard by the western boundary accessed off Anglesea Street and courtyard at the rear by its northern boundary. The ground floor commercial unit is currently vacant but the ground floor's authorised use is offices and was last used in February 2009 as a recruitment agency. This is laid out in a traditional Victorian shopfront with fascia, stall riser, capitals and extensive glazing with the door on the chamfered corner. The upper floor is rendered in white with bay and pried feasters such as dentils. The rear of the ground floor was formerly part of the commercial unit but was converted to one bedsitter when the upper floor flat was converted to two bedsitters, following grant of planning permission in 20o5 (WB/04/1482/FULL). The flats are accessed from Anglesea Street, independent of the commercial unit. The enclosed yard provides refuse and other storage and cycle storage for the existing flats and is accessible form a rear twitten. The building is slightly recessed for the back edge of the pavement with a narrow forecourt. There is no off street car parking and the site is within a Controlled Parking Zone.

2. CONSULTATIONS

The Environment Health Manager offers no objections.

West Sussex County Council Highway Authority

Comments given on WB/10/1044/FULL;

This application has been dealt with in accordance with the Development Control Scheme protocol for small scale proposals which include up to 5 residential units or extensions to single units accessed from roads that do not form part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN). As such the comments provided by Local Development should be considered to be advice only, with respect to this planning application.

West Sussex County Council was consulted previously on Highway Matters for this location under planning application no. WB/1212/04 to which no highway objections were raised.

This proposal has been considered by means of a desktop study, using the information and plans submitted with this application, in conjunction with other available WSCC map information. A site visit can be arranged on request.

The proposal is for the change of use from shop/office to a 1x1-bed flat. The proposal could increase the demand for on-street parking in this location, however given the previous retail and office use of the unit the number of vehicles visiting the site would be expected to fall.

The new flat is to be situated in a sustainable location, and cycle parking is provided.

The proposal does not include details regarding the storage of household waste. WSCC would advise that no waste is to be stored within the publicly maintainable highway, and this should be secured by condition. The Applicant is also advised that doors and windows should not open over the highway in this location.

Economic Development Team

This is a stand alone commercial property, surrounded by residential units. It is located close to a Neighbourhood Shopping Centre which currently has vacant premises. The application states this property was placed on the market in September 2009. We understand that the property has been advertised on the internet and in the local press at an affordable rate, on flexible terms. The agent confirms that many viewings have been undertaken, but due to the size of the premises, no tenant has been secured and therefore this property is no longer considered viable for employment use.

Economic Development therefore do not raise an objection for this change of use to residential and would welcome external building improvements to this property, to help uplift the surrounding area.

Policy Manager

The shop/office unit is located south of Tarring Road neighbourhood centre but not part of it. The property is adjoined by residential properties on both sides. We have no objection to this shop/office changing to residential.

3. REPRESENTATIONS

None

4. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The principal issues raised by this application are; the loss of employment premises; suitability of conversion to residential use in this fringe town centre location; design quality and impact on the townscape and access and parking. As such it should be primarily judged against Saved Worthing Local Plan policies RES7, H13, H18, BE1 and TR9 and South East Plan policies SP3; SP4; CC2; CC3; CC4; CC6; CC7; TC2; H1; H4; H5; T2; T4; NRM10; RE3; SCT1; SCT2; SCT3 and SCT5. Also relevant is Core Strategy Policies 4,7,8 and 9 which has now assumed material status following acceptance of the Strategy by the Inspector as sound and recent adoption of the strategy by the Cabinet (and allied Knight Franklyn Economic Research Report prepared for the Local Development Framework).

Additionally applicable are; Government policy in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing: PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth; Planning Policy Statement 24: Planning and Noise and PPG13: Transport and the recent precedents for determining similar conversions nearby in the town centre, including appeal decisions.

Loss of employment premises

South East Plan policy NE3 resists the loss of accessible and well located industrial and commercial sites where there is the good prospect of employment use and this is reinforced by allied polices to promote the viability and function of Worthing town centre in policy TC2 and strengthen the economic base of the Sussex coastal towns in policies SCT1 to 3. PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth also promotes sustainable economic development, particularly in town centres. Core Strategy Policy 4 complements this approach in a more focussed manner and states:

*2. Outside the protected employment areas the conversion or redevelopment of land and buildings currently in employment use or last used for employment purposes will be resisted unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the site (or part of the site) or premises is genuinely redundant and is unlikely to be re-used for industrial or commercial use within the Plan period, having regard to the following factors:*

*The site, with or with adaptation, would not be capable of accommodating an acceptable employment development.*

*No effective demand exists or is likely to exist in the future to use the land or buildings for employment generating activities. Consideration should include the length of time the property has remained vacant, the attempts made to sell/let it and the demand for the size and type of employment premises in the area.*

*The condition of the property and the works required to make it suitable for an employment use, either through refurbishment or redevelopment, would be uneconomic.*

*The loss of a small proportion of floorspace would lead to a significant upgrade of the remaining employment floorspace.*

*The existing use conflicts with neighbouring uses.*

Whilst the site is within the town centre fringe area close to the station and a Neighbourhood shopping centre, it is outside of any designated office location in the Core Strategy or any other established office area and the surrounding area is mainly residential in character.

The premises are small and not up to modern standards and lack any dedicated off street parking. They are understood to have seen some

have been shown but no offers made, not least due to the size of the premises. Given the site is in a very much tertiary office location, the Team does not wish to resist the application and the Policy Manager raises no objections either.

The loss is regrettable and the premises are quite prominent and would be suitable for a variety of small or start up commercial uses but their loss would be difficult to resist.

Suitability of conversion to residential use in this fringe town centre location

The proposal would make efficient use of sustainably located brownfield land, and complies with Core Strategy Policy 8 which supports flat in and around town centre locations and would contribute towards the Core Strategy and Regional housing provision targets.

Turning to the amenity impacts, flats are an established part of the character of the area. The adjoining scouts hall and retained ground floor office use are considered to be a generally acceptable neighbours and the new flat will contribute to the life of the area and return a vacant property to a positive active use.

The flat is small but not unduly so. Future occupiers would be somewhat exposed as the site is on a corner with only very limited set back form the pavement. However, if the lower part of the sashes were obscure glazed, this would provide an acceptable level of privacy. Refuse/domestic waste recycling arrangements may be secured by condition. Internal sound insulation between the flats may be dealt with under Building Regulations.

Impact on the property and townscape

The loss of the characterful and attractive shopfront is regrettable but a suitable memory is kept in the retention of the fascia and by the detail on the line of the former window to Angelsea street. The sash windows integrate successfully and details of this and the matching facing materials are reserved by conditions.

Parking and access

No off-street car parking is acceptable in this very sustainable location, close to shops and good public transport, especially given the type of accommodation proposed and compared to the previous commercial use. There is space for cycle storage in the rear yard but details are reserved by condition.

5. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, subject to:-

1. Standard condition on time
2. approved drawings

3. Obscure glaze lower sashes .
4. Details of cycles storage
5. Details of refuse storage
6. Details of sashes and shopfront.
7. Materials to match

REASON FOR APPROVAL

The loss of these commercial premise is regrettable but on balance it has been demonstrated that sufficient marketing has been undertaken to justify their loss given their small size, condition and marginal location. The new flat is compatible with the character of the area and will meet a demand for this type of accommodation and contribute towards housing targets. The new dwelling provides an adequate quality of environment and is sustainably located. The shopfront conversion is sensitive to the building and townscape. As such and subject to the conditions, the proposal is acceptable and dos not conflict with Saved Worthing Local Plan policies RES7, H13, H18, BE1 and TR9 and South East Plan policy RE3 and Core Strategy Policies 4, 7 , 8 and 9.

HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 8 (Right to Respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application. It is accepted that the proposal, if approved, would have some impact on the neighbouring properties. However, it is considered that the level of development proposed would not cause undue harm in terms of additional noise, disturbance and loss of privacy and that, on balance, existing residential quality of life would not be adversely affected as a result of the proposal. Accordingly it is considered that it is acceptable with regard to Article 8 and Article 1.

**DELEGATED**

Case Officer sign..... Date 5.4.11

Authorising Officer sign..... Date 5.4.11