Expiry Date - 08/02/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1702/23 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Premium House The Esplanade Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: External alterations to building involving addition of a through render finish and replacement UPVC windows (all elevations at first floor and above). Additional bin and cycle storage areas to be provided within the existing car park.

Date of site visit: As for NOTICE/0007/23

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: Y – Amended plans

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a 5-storey building consisting of 4 floors (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th) of vacant offices located above ground-floor service accommodation and an undercroft towards the front of the building used as Worthing Hand Car Wash & Valeting Centre. Attached to the east side is a single-storey building, used as a vehicle repair garage and MOT centre. Attached to the south side is a 6-storey residential flat block, Esplanade Court. The application property currently shares a U-shaped car park with Esplanade Court, accessed from The Esplanade.

Proposal

This full application seeks permission for elevation alterations consisting of the application of external wall insulation with a through-render finish painted white to all elevations; replacement of existing windows (first-floor and above) in grey UPVC; plus the construction of a cycle shelter and bin store within the external grounds.

The proposed cycle store will consist of an open-sided curved-roof structure (approximately 3m x 3m) supported on posts located within the SE corner of the shared car park. Provision would be made for 8no cycles to serve the occupiers of the new flats granted Prior Approval under NOTICE/0007/23. The bin store will consist of 3no Eurobins enclosed on the south side by the boundary wall with the seafront promenade. The individual cubicles are shown separated by a ‘restraint bar’.

Planning History

NOTICE/0007/23 Application for permitted development for prior approval for change of use from Class E at first, second, third and fourth floors to 16 No. 1

bed dwellings (Class C3). PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED AND GRANTED 06.09.2023.

AWDM/0281/24 Partial Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 02 (Noise mitigation measures) of previously approved application NOTICE/0007/23. APPROVED 11.03.2024.

Consultations

WSCC: No objection, commenting:-

"*West Sussex County Council (WSCC), previously provided consultation advice for this site for application NOTICE/0007/23 raising no objections. The LPA permitted the application.*

From inspection of the submitted application documents, the proposals include the provision of additional cycle parking within the existing car park. The proposed siting of the cycle and bin storage arrangements does not appear to impact the existing parking or turning arrangements.

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 NPPF (paragraph 115) and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal."

WSP: No objection.

Adur and Worthing Councils:

EHO (Public Health):

Works of construction or demolition, including the use of plant and machinery, necessary for implementation of this consent shall be limited to the following times.

Monday - Friday 08:00 - 18:00 Hours
Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 Hours
Sundays and Bank Holidays no work permitted

Any temporary exception to these working hours shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority at least five days in advance of works commencing. The contractor shall notify the local residents in writing at least three days before any such works.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of the area

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Legislation and Policies

Worthing Local Plan: SP2, DM5, DM15, DM16, DM17
Revised National Planning Policy Framework (HCLG 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance (CLG)

Planning Assessment

An overarching objective of the Local Plan is to help adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change in the way new and existing development is shaped through (amongst other things) carbon reduction and sustainable design and construction.

Strategic policy SP2 sets out the a comprehensive approach to addressing climate change and states in relation to carbon reduction that (a) development proposals are expected to reduce the amount of energy used in the construction and operation of buildings and improve energy efficiency, including through retrofitting existing properties, to contribute to achieving zero carbon emissions.

The Design and Access Statement submitted with this application states that the proposals will upgrade the energy performance of the building and assist in achieving an EPC rating of C or above through fabric improvements. The u-value of the external walls will be improved from 1.07W/m²K (existing) to 0.17W/m²K (proposed) which would be compliant with Part L targets.

Thus, there is no objection in principle to the proposed development, the key considerations are the effects on visual amenity and local character, neighbour amenity and highway safety.

Visual Amenity and Local Character

Premium House is a mid-20C concrete–framed, 5-storey structure with ribbon glazing in horizontal bands above ground-floor alternating with bands of brickwork, other than on top floor, where windows are spaced out separately with brickwork in-between. It makes an assertive and prominent contribution to the street scene in this part of Brighton Road, although there are other similar scale buildings in the immediate vicinity including the attached Esplanade Court, nearby Clarence Court (4-storey) and Hampton Court (6-storey).

Policy DM5 requires all new development to be all high architectural design quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area. This includes considerations of proportion, materials, and detailed design.

The application of external insulation and associated white-painted rendered finish will make a conspicuous change to the appearance of this building.

Although the character and appearance of the existing building is typical of the modern architectural styles of the mid-20C) and of no particular architectural merit it is nevertheless articulated by the exposed concrete frame, banded brickwork and ribbon windows with expressed cill detail to break-up the visual mass of the building with a distinct horizontal emphasis. This is notably different to the attached Esplanade Court, which apart from having a rendered exterior, has a strong vertical proportion created through the form of its bay windows, which are core design feature.

As initially proposed, officers were concerned that applying the external insulation would obliterate the existing design features of the building, in effect emphasising its visual mass and dominance within the street scene. Similarly, there was concern that the 'heavier' appearance of the proposed UPVC windows in place of the existing metal-framed ribbon windows, would also result in the loss of existing character, further detracting from the appearance of the building. [The replacement window design also includes the insertion of new top-vents necessary as part of the ventilation system for the approved residential change of use.]

Following discussions, the proposed replacement UPVC windows will now have dark grey frames, heads and surrounds (instead of the previously proposed white frames) which will be more consistent with the appearance of the existing windows. Also, no opaque panels are now proposed, with all the replacement windows fitted with glazing. Further amendments have also been received which now propose that the application of render will reflect the stepped profile of the existing concrete frame, painted to match the colour of the windows. Together with the introduction of an aluminium 'cill' detail, this will enable the existing horizontal emphasis of the building to be continue to be 'read'.

Concerns were also raised by officers about the resilience of the proposed through-colour render to the effects of weathering. The Agent has confirmed the product as 'K-rend, silicone TC' which should provide a more durable finish, better-suited to this coastal location.

The submitted drawing shows the level of the existing car park below the level of the adjacent promenade. The proposed bins will therefore in effect be screened in views from the promenade by the existing flint and brick boundary wall. The cycle shelter (2.6m high) will project above the height of the wall, but is shown as a relatively modest, lightweight structure and would not be an unsightly addition to this seafront location.

On balance, taking into consideration the resulting improvements to the thermal efficiency of the building and associated carbon reduction, it is considered the proposed external alterations will be satisfactory and will not seriously detract from the quality of the appearance of the building or the surrounding street scene.

Neighbour Amenity

The nearest residential neighbours are those within Esplanade Court. The proposed external alterations would not give rise to any adverse impacts for the residential amenities of the occupiers.

The bin and cycle store are shown in the car park adjacent to existing parking bays in the SE corner of the shared car park. There are no flats on the ground-floor of Esplanade Court which is used for garaging. Thus, any activity associated with the use of the proposed facilities will be well-separated from the windows of the flats.

Highway safety

One existing car parking space would be lost in the far SE corner of the shared car park (not within the demise of Esplanade Court) to accommodate the proposed bin and cycle storage facilities. However, there are 20+ other parking spaces available within the demise of Premium House and consequently it is considered the loss of 1no space would have no adverse impacts for highway safety.

On the other hand the layout of the proposed cycle/bin facilities in the far SE corner of the car park results in limited available manoeuvring space and care will need to be taken in relation to the collection and moving of the large bins within the car park.

Recommendation

1. Approved plans
2. Time limit
3. Render to consist of K-rend silicone TS unless otherwise agreed
4. Replacement window frames, heads and surrounds in dark grey.
5. Hours of construction

Informative

Pro-active amendment

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 18.04.2024

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 18 April 2024