Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0865/20 Recommendation – Approve

Site: 106 - 112 Brighton Road, Shoreham-By-Sea

Proposal: Extension of mezzanine floorspace; amendments to the external facades of the warehouse building; installation of perimeter boundary fencing, barrier and gates for security purposes; and partial use of the external area for enclosed storage.

Date of site visit: Seen using Google Maps

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

This application relates to 106-112 Brighton Road, Shoreham, on the north side of the A259 Brighton Road to the south of the railway line. It has recently been vacated by Northgate PLC who previously used the property as a vehicle hire premises under personal permission reference AWDM1123/14.

The site comprises a warehouse building with hard surfacing in front previously used for the display of hire vehicles. Immediately east of the site is a row of two storey terraced dwellings. To the north is the main coastal railway line.

The site has been acquired by the Southern Gas Network (SGN) for use as a storage and distribution depot. The supporting statement explains:

"*SGN's new Site at Shoreham has been identified as a suitable location for providing their main depot facility for the Sussex region due to its central location between Worthing and Brighton, direct access to the local road network and trunk roads including the A27 and its existing permission as a B8 facility with B1 ancillary uses.*
The Shoreham Site will provide a strategic location for SGN to maintain emergency first response times to national gas emergency calls in the region. The existing unit when reconfigured will also provide the base from which SGN would be able to manage the projected workload in the Sussex region over the next ten years."

Two applications have been submitted:

1. Variation of condition 5 of previously approved AWDM/0565/20 to allow amended operating hours of 7am -6pm Monday to Fridays inclusive, 8am-1pm on Saturdays and no working on Sundays or Public Holidays (plus access during out of hours gas emergencies) (AWDM/0863/20).
2. Extension of mezzanine floorspace; amendments to the external facades of the warehouse building; installation of perimeter boundary

fencing, barrier and gates for security purposes; and partial use of the external area for enclosed storage (AWDM/0865/20).

In more detail, the proposal comprises:

Mezzanine Floor

The recently approved S73 application (ref: AWDM/0565/20) removed the use restrictions previously applied to the mezzanine floorspace (ancillary B1 use no longer restricted to the mezzanine) and regularised the amount to 284sqm.

It is proposed to add an additional 123sqm of mezzanine floorspace resulting in an increase from 284sqm to 407sqm. The proposed increase to the mezzanine floorspace will remain less than the 1,022sqm approved in 1989 (ref: SU/288/88/TP/304).

External alterations

The warehouse is to be internally reconfigured. This involves internal partitioning to create a new ancillary office area, meeting rooms and welfare facilities within the front section of the unit with the rear part used for secure internal storage. The mezzanine level above the new ground floor office will provide an Incident / Briefing Room with additional welfare facilities at the upper floor level.

These alterations include 4no. new window openings to the south facing (front) elevation (2no. at ground floor and 2no. at first floor level.)
In addition, the existing roller shutter door opening on the south elevation is to be enlarged to improve the transfer of plant/equipment and materials into and out of the unit.

The cladding to the first floor elevation will be replaced with a new composite cladding panel, described as Kingspan KS900EB – Wall System Vertically laid - Colour to be "Grey white.

The existing double doors on the west side are to be replaced with a double window and 3 escape doors at the rear are to be replaced with three new separate routes of escape from the ground floor store to the external area at the front and west side.

Security

A new 2.4m high mesh fence with black colour coating is to be erected along the southern frontage with new security gates and an internal access barrier and a separate pedestrian access. (The security gates will remain open during hours of operation with access into and out of the site managed by the access-controlled barrier security).

Changes to forecourt

The existing car parking area is not delineated and it is proposed to formalise the parking bays. This includes 1 disabled parking space and two spaces provided with electric vehicle charging points. (This has been

amended following receipt of WSCC Highways comments to provide 2no. double EV charging points. This change will result in a total of 4no. active charging points. Underground ducts will be installed to provide the necessary infrastructure to the remaining 10no. passive parking bays.)

A cycle shelter for 6 bicycles is also proposed.

An external storage area is also proposed on the west side of the forecourt as a loading area for boards and barriers and for the parking overnight of a specialist Core & Vac Vehicle.

Relevant Planning History

• SU/207/86/TP/2249 – Outline application for warehouse with mezzanine floor for light industrial use. Approved on 6th January 1987;
• SU/233/87/TP/1638 – Application for approval of reserved matters of SU/207/86/TP/2249. Approved on 19th January 1988;
• SU/16/87/TP/1100 – Variation of Condition 11 of SU/207/86/TP/2043 to enable hours of working to be extended to 6.30am to 9.30am. Approved on 2nd March 1987;
• SU/288/88/TP/304 – Variation of Condition 3 of SU/207/86/TP to increase size of the mezzanine floor area to 1022m2. Approved on 6th February 1989;
• SU/94/89/TP/210 – Alterations to windows and doors. Approved on 13th June 1989;
• SU/131/05/TP/22002 – Change of use of 1st floor offices to private members snooker club with incidental bar and food area. Temporary approval granted on 16th August 2005;
• AWDM/1123/14 – Change of use to commercial vehicle hire and ancillary sales with associated servicing and vehicle wash. Approved on 13th October 2014.
• AWDM/0565/20 - Application for variation of condition 3 of previously approved SU/207/86 to regularise the use of the property as B8 warehouse with ancillary B1 floorspace with 284 sqm of mezzanine floor space. Approved on 22 May 2020

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways** Officer has no objection.
Access and Visibility
The applicant proposes to utilise the existing access for this development. The erection of a perimeter boundary will include the installation of access gates. There is sufficient space for vehicles to pull in off the highway and wait whilst the gates are in operation. There are no apparent visibility issues at this access. An inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last five years reveals no recorded injury accidents within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.
Considering both the amount of floor space and use type proposed, the LHA does not anticipate that this proposal would give rise to a material intensification of movements to or from the site.
Parking and Turning

The applicant proposes a reconfiguration of the existing parking area to provide 14 car parking spaces and 4 parking bays for mechanical plant. Under WSCC Parking Standards, one parking space should be provided per 100 sqm of B8 use and one parking space per 30 sqm for B1 use.
Therefore, the LHA would expect a provision of 23-25 parking spaces for this development.
The LHA acknowledges that there is additional space on-site to accommodate vehicular parking if required. Additionally, the applicant proposes six cycle parking spaces, which will promote the use of sustainable alternative modes of transport to the private car. The site is also situated in a sustainable location well connected by public transport. Comprehensive parking restrictions along Brighton Road will prevent vehicles from parking on-street in places that could be considered a detriment to highway safety.
In the interests of sustainability and as result of the Government's 'Road to Zero' strategy for at least 50% of new car sales to be ultra-low emission by 2030, electric vehicle (EV) charging points should be provided for all new non-residential developments. Based upon current EV sales rates within West Sussex, the applicant should provide active charging points for a minimum of 20% of all proposed off-street parking spaces, with the remaining 80% of parking spaces providing a 'passive' provision for future upgrades. For this proposal, of the 14 car parking spaces proposed, the LHA would expect the provision of 3 active and 11 passive EV parking spaces, in accordance with the above WSCC guidance and Adur Local Plan policy.
Sustainability
The site is situated in a sustainable location within walking/cycle distance of public transport links.
The 700 Coastliner passed through Brighton Road, providing regular connections towards Littlehampton and Brighton. Southwick Train Station is approximately 1.1km from the site. Cycling is a viable option in the area.

Adur and Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health** Officer has no objection

Technical Services: Flood risk- The application is within flood zone 2, the site is shown to have small regions at low risk from surface water flooding. The application is for changes at the mezzanine level, we therefore have no objections to the proposals from a flood risk perspective.

Surface water drainage- the application does not include changes to impermeable area; we therefore have no conditions to request. Any proposed alterations to surface water drainage must be designed and constructed in accordance with building regulations.

Network Rail: Due to the close proximity of the proposed works to Network Rail's infrastructure, Network Rail ask that the applicant follows the Asset Protection informatives to ensure the safety of the operational railway.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15, 25, 34
Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan 2019 Character Area 7
National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

The application site is located within Character Area 7 (Western Harbour Arm) in the Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan 2017. Whilst the properties on the south side of the A259 are designated for mixed-use redevelopment (B1 & C3 uses), the application site is not subject to any site-specific allocations.

Planning Assessment

The most visible part of this proposal is the new security fence along the frontage. At present the site has only a low wall along the frontage with no fencing and is quite open. The proposed mesh fence will have an enclosing effect but the applicants require improved security. The applicant's agent has provided more information in support of the proposal:

"*The fencing proposed to be installed is P358 specification mesh fencing. This is considered to be a more aesthetically appealing alternative to palisade fencing. It is noted that palisade fencing is used to secure the perimeter of the neighbouring unit to the west.*

I agree that the drawings do not depict this particularly well given their scale so I attach several images of the proposed fencing to help visualise what it would look like once installed. The gapping in the mesh helps to ensure transparency and avoid a solid appearance. It is SGN's preference for black fencing but would be willing to accept a grey colour should this be considered more appropriate."

The submitted information and extra details clarify the appearance of the fence and, while it will result in a change to the character of this site and the street scene, on balance, it is considered that it will be acceptable. There are examples of fencing and barriers elsewhere along Brighton Road (atTravis Perkins, Howdens, Screwfix).

An SGN employee visiting the Site out of hours will need to stop and get out of their vehicle to open the sliding gate. Manually operated gates are considered to help minimise noise as they do not require a motor to start their movement. Their movement (and indeed noise levels) can also be better controlled when manually operated.

The increase in the size of the mezzanine floor is not anticipated to result in a material intensification of activity at the site. The external changes to the building and forecourt are considered to be acceptable.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 as amended (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the premises shall be used only for purposes within Use Class B8, with ancillary B1 use, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 or in any equivalent to that Class in any Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification.
2. No raw materials, finished or unfinished products or parts, crates, packing materials, nor any other items shall be stacked, stored or displayed on the site except within the building or within enclosed storage areas as shown on the approved site plan (dwg no. 8191138-5010 PA2) or approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the building shall not be further extended or altered by means of any development, including an increase in the extent of the mezzanine floor, as set out within Class H of Part 7 of the Schedule to that Order.
4. No working, trade or business whatsoever (including loading/unloading of vehicles and operation of plant and machinery) shall take place on the premises except during out of hours gas emergencies and between the hours of:
   7.00 am and 6.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays inclusive
   8.00 am and 1.00 pm on Saturdays
   nor at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.
5. The building subject of the application shall not be subdivided or occupied by more than one business concern without the prior approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority
6. No part of the development shall be first occupied until the car parking has been constructed in accordance with the approved site plan (dwg no. 8191138-5010 PA2). These spaces shall thereafter be retained at all times for their designated purpose.
7. No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved site plan (dwg no. 8191138-5010 PA2).
8. No part of the development shall be first occupied until the electric vehicle charging spaces have been provided in accordance with the approved site plan (dwg no. 8191138-5010 PA2) and details.

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

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning

permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Network Rail

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 5 August 2020

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 5 August 2020