Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Approve**
AWDM/0129/13

Site: **5 - 7 South Street, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 8AE**

Proposal: **Change of use and conversion of first floor offices to form 2 no. 1-bedroom flats, plus ground floor rear extension and rooflights**

Date of site visit: 14 February 2013

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application property sits on the east side of South Street. The two storey building is vacant but was formerly in use as offices. There is a first floor extension at the rear which is supported on brick piers with parking for 2 cars under.

The application is proposing to convert the first floor into two self contained flats with a separate entrance on the north side (formed from a new doorway). A vehicular access runs along the north side of the building, serving the existing parking spaces and neighbouring properties. A ground floor extension of 11sqm is proposed at the rear, under the first floor extension, to provide toilets and rest room for the retained commercial floorspace. Part of the existing ground floor will be lost to the new side entrance, staircase and bin store (also to be accessed from the north side).

Two parking spaces will be retained, plus two bicycle stands will be provided. The extension will result in the loss of four parking spaces.

Relevant site history

None relevant

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Strategic Planning Officer states that from inspection of the plans and information provided, the application includes a provision for of 2 off-street parking spaces to serve the new residential units. Having entered this information in to WSCC's car parking demand calculator, it would appear the provision of parking is slightly under the minimum standards for this area. However, given that this area is located in a sustainable location, close to public transport, it is envisaged that the use of a private car will not be relied upon as much. Whilst there are no concerns from a highway safety perspective on this, it is possible that this proposal could lead to an increase in parking demand in the local area; the LPA may wish to

consider this. The secured cycle provision included within the application (1 per unit) should be included to any planning consent, to offer alternative means of sustainable transport.

The parking is to be accessed via an existing junction on to South Street. This access looks adequate to support a development of this size. A turn on site looks to be achievable, allowing vehicles to enter and exit on to South Street in the forward gear.

Based on these comments, there would be no concerns raised to this application from a highway safety perspective, subject to a condition regarding the cycle provision.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The Environmental Health Officer has no objection but recommends the precautionary contaminated land informative.

Lancing Parish Council: No objections providing the internal room sizes conform to ADC's minimum standards.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH9 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No. 2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats' and No. 4 'Flat Conversions'.
South East Plan (GOSE 2009): CC1, CC6, BE1
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises the provision of residential accommodation above commercial floorspace within the built up area and can be supported in principle, subject to compliance with size requirements. It is not identified for any particular use or purpose in the Local Plan. The property has been marketed since November 2012 only but to date the applicant has not received any offers for the office space. The commercial agent has stated that cheaper rents can be found within Lancing Business Park where there are no parking restrictions. He considers that the property would be more successfully let as A1 or A2 on the ground floor with flats above. The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and the effect on the character and appearance of the dwelling and its surroundings.

Visual amenity

The proposed extension at the rear will not be visible from the street and will be largely 'hidden' under the first floor projection. The only other alterations are minor in nature (new door and window openings to side and rooflights to rear) which will not have a significant visual impact.

Residential amenity

The proposal will not harm the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The rear extension will not affect light or outlook to neighbouring properties while the new first floor openings at the side can be required to be obscure glazed by way of a condition.

The proposed flats meet the minimum floorspace requirements as set out in DC Standard No.4 of 45sqm, with individual room sizes also meeting the Standard. No external amenity space will be provided, in common with many town/village centre sites, and it is not considered to be sufficient reason to refuse the application.

Access and Parking

Vehicular access will be via the existing shared access with the garden centre at the rear with two parking spaces remaining available for use for the proposed flats. Parking for the commercial use on the ground floor will remain in the car park in the rear yard.

The site is in a sustainable location, being very close to Lancing railway station and bus stops. WSCC have noted that the parking provision on site is slightly below the recommended standard but, in view of its location, the proposal is not considered to result such a demand for parking as to cause harm to the locality. Cycle parking is also to be provided within the undercroft, by way of wall mounted stands attached to the end of the proposed extension. While not providing as much security as a lockable store, there is no space available on site to provide a shed/store and the proposal is acceptable in the circumstances.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is within the built up area and would help meet the need for additional housing without detracting from the existing local urban environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It would consequently not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH9) or the policies of the South East Plan (CC1, CC6, BE1)

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Obscure glaze side windows
3. Cycle and car parking to be provided and retained
4. Permission relates to approved plans

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.

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 11 March 2013

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 11 March 2013