Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/2138/20 Recommendation – Approve

Site: Town Hall Chambers, 45 - 49 High Street Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex

Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent for change of use and refurbishment of existing B1(a) office space to create 6no. residential units (4 x 1 bed maisonettes, 1 x 1 bed flat and 1 x 2 bed flat) and 1no. B1(a) office unit, extension of flat roof at rear plus new mono pitched roof, replacement and refurbishment of windows, new rooflights, vents.

Date of site visit: Visited in connection with previous application

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to the Old Town Hall on Shoreham High Street, within the Conservation Area. It has a 2 storey façade and is used as a restaurant on the ground floor with office accommodation above over 2 floors. It is a Grade II listed building. At the rear is The Annexe, a modern 4 storey addition with a flat roof and is also used for office accommodation. There is also a 2 storey extension which encloses a square light well. The ground level drops towards the river to the south and the entry level is at lower ground floor. It is not Listed.

Permission was granted in 2014 the conversion of the building to form 6 flats and 1 no. B1(a) office as follows:-

Lower ground floor – lower floor of B1(a) office space and cycle/waste store
Upper Ground floor – upper floor of B1 (a) office space and retained restaurant use
First Floor – 2 bedroom flat and ground floor of 4 x 1 bed flats
Second floor – 1 bedroom flat and upper floor of 4 x 1 bed flats

That permission has lapsed and the current application is for an almost identical scheme but with a few minor amendments. There is a separate application for planning permission (AWDM/2136/20).

The current application proposes the same quantum of development.
A small mono-pitched roof extension is proposed at the back of the building over an existing void. All windows and doors on the west facing elevation of the Annexe are to be replaced with new timber casements. Two windows on the rear (south) elevation of the original building are also to be replaced in timber with metal coating.

Four conservation rooflights are to be installed on the south facing (rear) roofslope of the Old Town Hall, together with 6 bathroom extractors and a further 2 on the east facing hip of the roof.

Internally, a large circulation staircase in The Annexe and decorative windows are to be retained.

Changes from the previous scheme are:

- New ventilation for kitchen and bathroom space, via internal pipework to be fixed to the wall in discreet locations.
- Additional low rise flues and venting tiles to be installed on the rear roofslope.
- A new external escape staircase which was previously proposed to run from ground level on the High Street along to upper ground floor level on the Annexe on the west side of the building has been removed from the scheme.
- Two flats have been reconfigured in order to comply with the nationally described space standards.

Relevant site history

AWDM/0737/14 - Change of use and refurbishment of existing B1(a) office space to create 6no. residential units (4 x 1 bed maisonettes, 1 x 1 bed flat and 1 x 2 bed flat) and 1no. B1(a) office unit with new external raised walkway with balustrade to west elevation, extension of flat roof at rear plus new mono pitched roof, replacement and refurbishment of windows, new rooflights, vents.

AWDM/0739/14 - Application for Listed Building Consent for change of use and refurbishment of existing B1(a) office space to create 6no. residential units (4 x 1 bed maisonettes, 1 x 1 bed flat and 1 x 2 bed flat) and 1no. B1(a) office unit with new external raised walkway with balustrade to west elevation, extension of flat roof at rear plus new mono pitched roof, replacement and refurbishment of windows, new rooflights, vents.

Consultations

Historic England: No comment

Adur District Conservation Advisory Group: The members would refer you to an abstract from the D&A statement, where it states that such 6 dwellings are designed for residents who will use the local transport services with no car ownership. Previous approved applications did not raise this point for what were then commercial usages.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 policies 2, 3, 4, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 28, 34, 36

'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.1 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats'
Sustainable Energy SPD (August 2019)
Adur Planning and Climate Change Checklist (June 2021)
Shoreham by Sea Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy (ADC 2008)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (DCLG 2015)

Planning Assessment

Impact on Listed Building

The extension to the rear of the building affects the annexe rather than the original part of the building.

A number of flues and vents are proposed which will project through the roof of the Listed Building. While unfortunate, they are required because of the mechanical ventilation system proposed (necessary as a result of the proximity of the accommodation to the High Street). They are to be positioned low down on the roof and would be of limited height. Vent tiles would be recessed so as not to break the roofline and would be coloured to match the slates. Internally, the ventilation system will be hidden within cupboards with ductwork exposed and suspended from the ceiling at a height to prevent interference with the decorative ceiling, or running through the roof void. Details have been submitted and the impact on the character of the building is not considered to be harmful.

The removal of the external staircase on the west elevation is beneficial to the visual appearance of the development and its impact on the Conservation Area.

Internally, new partitions will preserve existing detailing and be located between existing pilasters. The retention of the circulation staircase and stained glass windows is an important part of the scheme and ensures that important features are preserved. All windows and doors on the west elevation of the Annexe are to be replaced with new timber casement windows and doors. Conservation rooflights are proposed to the rear of the listed building which are considered to be appropriately positioned and spaced. Solar panels are suggested as being proposed in the Sustainability Report and final detail of these will need to be submitted and approved to ensure they do not harm the character or appearance of the building.

The removal of the two windows on the rear elevation are within the original building. Justification for their removal has been provided by the applicant's agent:

"*The two windows in question were both shown to be replaced on the original planning and listed building approval elevation drawing, C-2022 202 F, the amendment note for which remains unaltered. (Original approvals were AWDM/0739/14 for listed building and AWDM/0737/14 for planning).*

The amendment note gives the reason for their replacement: the top portion of the windows in question are to be obscure glazed, to hide and fire seal, a floor passing behind them, while the lower portions need to open automatically in the event of a fire to allow smoke to be vented from the spaces behind them. The existing windows are not readily adaptable for automatic opening and are in poor condition so it was proposed that they be replaced with new.

The new windows were covered under condition 2 of both of the original approvals, requiring details to be submitted, while condition 9, approved documents, of the planning approval, (condition 4 of the listed building approval), confirm the approved elevations.

Ventilation of the spaces behind the lower portion of the windows is a building regulation requirement and the location of the windows give an ideal opportunity to provide that, without needing to install unsightly mechanical extract type vents which would have an adverse visual impact on the building; by utilising these windows such a visual impact is avoided.

As can be seen from the elevations, the window appearance, in terms of transom and panes, is to replicate that of the existing.

The windows are also in a poor state of repair and require replacement. The proposal, as on the original approvals and under the revision note, is for timber clad in metal as the existing windows are metal."

Given that approval was previously given to replace these windows, and that they are to match existing, it is considered that permission can be granted for their replacement this time, subject to a condition requiring full details.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is a sympathetic proposal which will not harm the historic fabric of the listed building.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Details of external balustrade, new windows and doors, flues, vent tiles, solar panels and rooflights to be submitted and approved
4. Internal ductwork as per approved drawings and provided prior to first occupation
5. Glazing details
6. Protect building from damage
7. Damage made good

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 14 November 2023
Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 14 November 2023