Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0278/24 Recommendation – Approve

Site: West House, 1 Forthaven, Shoreham-By-Sea

Proposal: Permanent change of use of garden land to provide a converted, vintage horse box to sell takeaway drinks, savoury and sweet pastries and cakes to passing walkers.

Date of site visit: 13 March 2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a grass lawn adjacent to the car park serving Shoreham Fort. It forms part of the residential curtilage of West House, 1 Forthaven but is separated from the main rear garden of that dwelling by a fence. It runs at right angles to the main garden and sits between the car park and a ramp leading down to the River Adur.

Permission was granted in May 2021 to change the use of this area to enable a vintage horsebox to be sited on the land for the sale of drinks, savoury and sweet pastries and cakes. The permission was temporary for 3 years only.

This application now seeks a permanent change of use of the land to enable the horsebox cafe to remain.

A supporting letter submitted with the application states:

"*We set up our business in 2021 out of necessity when our main income, built up from a lifetime of working in the arts, stopped due to the pandemic. We have now been running The Pollinator as a family business for two and a half years. We had hoped that the small cafe would attract local folks plus walkers and swimmers. It has far exceeded our expectations and has been described by many as a much loved local service.*
During the pandemic when people were only able to gather outside, our cafe became an important meeting place for people to chat and share news. For people by themselves this social contact was very important. Once the pandemic was over The Pollinator maintained its role as a small community hub.
Our ethos is to sell local produce at reasonable prices; all our food is made on Shoreham Beach or in Brighton. All our packaging is recyclable and compostable. We clear away at the end of each day and reset in the morning. Each morning we do a thorough litter pick of the car park which is always much needed. Usually Richard and I do this but if not we pay a staff member to tidy up.
We feel we have enhanced our corner of the beach. We feel it is important to maintain the natural habitat of the beach and encourage those living and visiting to value and enjoy it. We have been able to support many local

groups and organisations including Shoreham's National Coastwatch, Friends of Shoreham Beach, The Church of The Good Shepherd, Ropetackle Arts Centre, The RSPB and local walking groups by advertising and or hosting their events.
In the summer we are able to provide refreshments to local families and visitors creating a warm and welcoming environment. Indeed one of the real joys to come from The Pollinator has been to see the number of new friendships that have been made (one reason for the name of the cafe). We would like to be able to continue to sell coffee and act as a small centre for people to gather in the years to come."

The site is accessed via an existing gate at the southern end of the garden.

The site lies close to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Shoreham Fort.

Relevant Planning History

AWDM/0392/21 - Change of use of garden land to provide a converted, vintage horse box to sell takeaway drinks, savoury and sweet pastries and cakes to passing walkers.

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways Authority** has no objection. The horse box has been in operation since July 2021. The current application proposals are to allow for the permanent siting and continued operation of the horse box. The LHA are not aware of any highway safety concerns linked to the site's operation since July 2021, and as such would raise no concerns to the proposed permanent change of use.

Adur and Worthing Councils: Public Health: No objection.

Drainage Consultant: No objections

Environment Agency: No objection

Historic England: No comment

Representations

21 letters of support received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 2, 15, 16, 17, 26
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site lies within the built up area and, while abutting the site of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, it does not intrude onto that site or the Local

Wildlife Site. It is currently private garden land and the main consideration is whether the proposal will have an acceptable visual impact and respect the amenities of neighbouring dwellings.

Visual amenity

The siting of a horsebox on the land has introduced built form into a grassed area which was previously undeveloped. However, the horsebox is small, measuring 1.8m wide, 3m long and 2.7m high above ground.

It is a small feature in the landscape and, in distant views from across the river, it is seen with parked cars and the car park behind. It is also at a slightly lower level than the car park.

It is not considered that it is unduly intrusive in the landscape.

Residential amenity

The nearest affected dwelling is the applicant's own property. Other dwellings are some distance away, separated by the car park, and will not be adversely affected. Comings and goings associated with the cafe are not expected to be significantly greater than those already associated with the car park/ fort/beach itself.

The application property will continue to enjoy a large garden.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. This permission allows only for the permanent siting of a single horse box on the land as specified in the application for the purpose of selling takeaway drinks, savoury and sweet pastries and cakes and for no other purpose

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

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.

Case Officer:	Peter Barnett	Date: 9 April 2024
Authorised by:	Gary Peck	Date: 10 April 2024