DELEGATED APPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS: WB/11/0098/FULL – Ground Floor Flat 12 Thorn Road

DATE OF SITE VISIT: 05/04/11

NEIGHBOURS CHECKED: Y

ADDITIONAL NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS (LIST ADDRESSES): N

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

The site is on a quiet residential street, immediately off the sea front promenade. There is a mix of late Victorian and Edwardian terraced houses in Thorn Road, some of which are divided into flats. The rear of the Beach hotel dominates the street. A Public House is near opposite the site.

The application property forms part of terrace a two-and-half storey in height where some of the ground floor is commercial space converted to residential use. Much of its original detailing has been lost over time.

PROPOSAL:

The development sought for has been advertised as installation of 4 No. white PVCu replacement windows and 1 No. replacement door

- The proposal consists of installation of 4 no. plastic windows and 1 no. door

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES:

South East Plan
CC1, CC6, BE1, BE16

Worthing Core Strategy
16

Worthing Local Plan 2003
H16, H18

Government Advice
PPS1, PPS5

REPRESENTATIONS AND RELEVANT CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

None

PLANNING ASSESSMENT:

Introduction

The principle planning concerns with this development is its impact visually and upon the established character and appearance of the Marine Parade and Hinterland Conservation Area.

Visual and Conservation Area Impact

The summary leaflet on the conservation area notes all the buildings in Thorn Road as "positive contributors" to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The local planning authority has a duty to ensure new development in a conservation area enhances and or preserves its special character and appearance

Original painted timber sliding sash windows are important architectural features that make a positive contribution. The ideal solution would be that any replacement should be an exact match to these.

However the applicant has declined to install such a window. Instead it is proposed to introduce plastic top opening windows on the front, rear, and side of the building. This is disappointing, especially in the case of the windows to the front face. Certainly this development does not enhance the conservation area.

Nonetheless there are persuasive reasons to why this development's impact upon the conservation area would be so marginal as to render any slight negative impact it has as negligible. This ensures the development meets the necessary test (i.e. the wider conservation area is more or less preserved).

Firstly, the present front window is not original. It forms part of a shop front which has been converted to a residential dwelling in the past. It is of a highly inappropriate design that fails to reflect the appropriate period detail of the recipient building, or its surroundings. Its replacement equally fails, but it is at least a slight improvement to the present window.

Secondly, the flat directly above the application property has lost its own original front facing windows to plastic top hung replacements; a development resisted by the Council but won at appeal. This appeal involved the loss of traditional timber vertical sliding sash windows whereas the current development replaces an unoriginal window. So the case for demanding an historic replication for the newly suggested front window is substantially weakened. It also means the architectural integrity of the host building is already substantially diluted.

Thirdly, the new front window matches the terms of material, method of opening, and frame proportion of the window of the adjoining building, No. 10 Thorn Road. Its installation would bring some degree of symmetry to the wider terrace which is acutely lacking (albeit secured by historically inaccurate windows).

Fourthly, the present poor architecturally integrity of the terrace means it is of limited architectural merit making only a limited contribution to the conservation area. De facto works to it would have marginal impact. Indeed, the Inspector at the appeal noted the *'unremarkable architectural character of this pair of buildings'*, and the *'preponderance of replacement PVCu windows in the street with only a few properties retained in all their original timber sash windows.'*

Fifthly, at the rear of the application property there is a mix of timber sash, casement and louvre windows. There is also a variety of window type, size, detailing and material on the adjoining properties. So the changes to the windows serving the bedroom, kitchen, lobby and bathroom would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the area or to the architectural character of No.12. A similar view was taken by the Inspector when allowing the appeal.

Finally, whilst Core Strategy Policy 16 and PPS21 refer to proposals exploring reasonable opportunities for enhancement, it is not considered that it would be reasonable to extend this to include a complete redesign of the converted shop front, especially as this is a householder application only and the additional cost of the ideal set of works. The cost here of introducing two sash windows centred on the bay would be between three to five times that of the application proposal.

Conclusion

The development represents a lost opportunity to gain an enhancement to the conservation area's character and appearance. Nonetheless, for the reasons already debated, the proposal's impact upon it is negligible.

This is due to the individual circumstances of the present condition of the host building, and its planning history. It makes resistance to the development difficult to sustain.

As such, approval of this proposal should certainly not be seen as a precedent for similar development in the conservation area.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve subject to:-

1. Standard time limit
2. Plans as approved

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The development represents a lost opportunity to gain an enhancement to the conservation area's character and appearance. Nonetheless the proposal's impact upon it is negligible; this is due to the individual circumstances of the present condition of the host building, and its planning history. It makes resistance to the development difficult to sustain.

Therefore the proposed development would not detract from the local environment, including the Conservation Area, and can take place without

resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It would consequently not conflict with Worthing Core Strategy Policy 16, the 'saved' policies of the Worthing Local Plan (H16, H18), and the South East Plan (CC1, CC6, BE1, BE16).

Approval of this proposal should certainly not be seen as a precedent for similar development in the conservation area.

HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 8 (Right to Respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application. It is accepted that the proposal, if approved, would have some impact on the neighbouring properties. However, it is considered that on balance, existing residential quality of life would not be significantly adversely affected as a result of the proposal. Accordingly it is considered that it is acceptable with regard to Article 8 and Article 1.

IS RECOMMENDATION CONTRARY TO LETTER (S) OF REPRESENTATION?

N/A

DELEGATED

Case Officer
Sign..... [redacted] .....Date..... 8/6/11

Authorising Officer
Sign..... [redacted] .....Date..... 7 6 11