expiry
11-12-07

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0633/07 **Recommendation - Permit**

Site: **Sussex Yacht Club 85 - 89 Brighton Road Shoreham-by-Sea West Sussex**

Proposal: **Screen fence along highway boundary (retrospective)**

The Application

The application relates to the Sussex Yacht Club site located at 85-89 Brighton Road, on the south side of the road. The site has a frontage of 230m onto the road and is served by Stowes Gap Hard in the middle of the site. Directly to the east and west of the site are Dolphin Hard and Tarmount Hard respectively.

The proposal is a retrospective application for a north side boundary fence 2.0m in height, which bounds the eastern most half of the site with the Brighton Road. The fence is approximately 95m in length and returns 5.0m on the eastern side adjacent to Tarmount Hard. It has a serpentine design to the top of the fence and is constructed of natural close boarded panels.

To the north of the site are properties which front onto New Road and Frosts Garage car dealership. To the east is the former Parcel Force site and to the west is the public footbridge to Shoreham Beach and Coronation Green.

Consultations and Representations

County Transport Planning Services: From site observation, the siting of the fence presents an obstruction to visibility at the main access point to Brighton Road and for the adjacent access on the eastern boundary of the site. The applicant has not provided evidence of the previous boundary protection although some chain-link fencing exists on the eastern boundary.

Given the sight line issues, a highway objection is raised for road safety reasons.

Without prejudice to the comments made in this response, if the applicant can provide modifications to the boundary to provide improved visibility at the locations highlighted above and in line with appropriate standards and based on the speed of traffic using Brighton Road, the Highway Authority would consider recommending approval subject to 5R.

County Planning Services: The Conservation Architect comments that it is an improvement. Unfortunately a decorative open screen fence could have

been put here. This would have allowed the public to see the dynamics of the boat yard.

Third Parties: There have been no third party objections to the application.

Adur District Conservation Advisory Group: No objection but comment that the site needs a footpath.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005): LOC1, CH4, DEV1, DEV4-5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996): AG1, AB4.

Planning Assessment

Policies
There is a statutory duty to pay attention to the need to preserve or enhance Conservation Areas. Local Plan policies AB4 require that the design and construction materials be of a high standard.

Structure Plan policies seek to protect and, where possible enhance the character and distinctiveness of areas, requiring high standards of design, layout and construction (DEV1). Policy AH7 of the Local Plan, relation specifically to extensions and alterations to dwellings, states that they should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable loss of light or privacy or have an overbearing effect on the neighbouring dwelling and be sympathetic to the original dwelling.

DEV4 states that new development should cater safely, conveniently and adequately for all travel needs by ensuring safe and adequate access to the highway network and by providing convenient, safe and attractive facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

Access
The WSCC Highways Officer has objected to the proposals on the grounds of obstructed visibility to Brighton Road from the main entrance to the boat-yard and from the Tarmount Hard to the east.

The main entrance to the site is very wide at the point at which it joins the Brighton Road. Prior to the erection of the fence visibility to the east had been restricted by the concrete posts and chain link fencing, and the temporary structures housed on the site which are located hard up to the northern boundary. The new fencing does not reduce this visibility by an amount that would warrant refusal.

With regards to the visibility exiting Tarmount Hard it is an access that is not used by free flowing traffic as it purely gives access to the river for boats. The applicant has stated that planting existing on the northern and eastern boundary of the site just inside the original fencing. No other evidence has been provided to suggest that this vegetation would have impeded the visibility from the Hard. However the boats themselves and the plant/machinery associated with their repair would have impeded any clear view from the access, and it is considered that, on balance, the proposed fence would not reduce the levels of highway safety given the very low use of the existing access combined with the original limited visibility.

To the north of the site there is a grass verge but no designated footpath, ensuring that the fence has no effect on pedestrian safety.

Visual amenity

The serpentine design of the fence is not considered to detract from the character of the Conservation Area, in fact it is an improvement on the open chain link fencing that it has replaced.

It is accepted that the dynamics of the boat-yard would have added vibrancy to the town centre and Conservation Area as a whole, however more often than not the underside of the boats on view would be covered in algae and are not considered to be particularly attractive in appearance.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that :-

2PC – amended

The ~~proposal~~ fence preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and has taken place without detraction from highway safety. It ~~would~~ does consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AB4) and the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan (CH4, DEV1, DEV4-5)

Case Officer: [signature]

Date: 04-12-07