Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1259/19 Recommendation – Approve

Site: Unit 1, 19 Peter Road, Lancing Business Park

Proposal: Subdivision of ground floor to create office and installation of mezzanine floor to provide additional office. Fitting of glazed screen to roller shutter entrance (north) elevation. Addition of 9 No. air conditioning units to side (west) elevation. Additional ground floor window to east elevation. (Marked as Unit 11 in Lancing Business Park)

Date of site visit: 12 September 2019

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application property is an industrial unit on Lancing Business Park, used for B1/B2/B8 purposes. It has a small office area on 2 floors in the NE corner of the building.

Permission is sought to install a mezzanine floor to increase the amount of office space over two floors. Approximately half of the building will be given over to office/non production floorspace. An additional window is to be installed on the east elevation facing the car park, at ground floor level. The existing roller shutter door on the front (north) elevation is to be altered to a glazed screen and 9no. a/c units are to be installed on the west elevation.

Relevant Planning History

AWDM/1358/12 - Erection of business/ industrial/warehouse building (classes B1/ B2/ B8) with 44 car parking spaces (in place of previous fire damaged building) - approved

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways Authority** has no objection. Peter Road is a privately maintained road within Lancing Business Park and adjoins the publicly maintained highway at the junction with Commerce Way to the east of the site. The LHA recommends that the planning authority seek the views of the proprietor of Peter Road regarding this proposal.

The junction onto Commerce Way is served via double yellow line parking restrictions within the private road. On street parking is an existing practise within Commerce Way. Manual for Streets advises that parking in visibility splays in built up areas is quite common, yet it does not appear to create significant problems in practise. Ideally, defined parking bays should be provided outside the visibility splay. However in some circumstances, where speeds are low, some encroachment may be acceptable.

The LHA has reviewed data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years. I note the occurrence of a collision at this junction however the cause of this has been attributed to driver error and not as a result of any defect with the existing junction.

The proposal includes internal alterations of the existing industrial unit and would not be anticipated to generate a material number of movements over that currently permitted at the site. Including the additional proposed floorspace, the proposal for 338 sqm of B1a floorspace outlines a requirement for 11.2 parking spaces to be provided at 1 space per 30sqm for a B1a use. It is unclear how many parking spaces currently exist to serve the 76sqm B1a use, however it is anticipated that alternative transport options are available within proximity of the site to alleviate the reliance on the use of a car.

Overspill parking would be anticipated to follow the same trend as is currently the practise within the Industrial Estate and be taken up via on street parking provisions. There are no known concerns with this existing practise however the LPA may wish to consider the impact on overspill parking in this location. Lancing railway station is a 15 minute cycle from the site and a bus service runs via the Western Road, allowing a direct link to sustainable travel provisions and providing workers and visitors a choice regarding how they travel.

Based upon the above considerations, the LHA raise no severe highways safety concerns to the proposal. Secure and covered cycle parking has not been outlined by the applicant as an existing or proposed arrangement. The LPA may wish to encourage the applicant to explore cycle storage opportunities to encourage further alternatives to using the car.

Adur and Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health** Officer has no objections.

Sompting Parish Council: The Council would like the potential explored to see if ground source/heat exchange could be used instead of air conditioning units as part of reducing the carbon footprint.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 9, 15, 25
National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises upgrading the existing business stock located within a protected industrial estate and can be supported in principle. The relevant issues are the effects on the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings and whether sufficient parking is available.

Visual amenity

The alterations do not increase the external footprint of the building and involve a new window and glazed screen on the most prominent elevations, neither of which are considered to cause visual harm.

The proliferation of a/c units is regrettable but they are to be located on the west elevation where they will be less noticeable than if sited elsewhere, being screened from wider views to a large extent by the neighbouring building.

Parking and Access

The proposal is increasing the floor area of the building to provide more office space. The applicant's agent has advised that their client is

"*currently based in an adjacent building immediately to the south-east corner of this unit, which they will continue to inhabit. They are not increasing head count so the number of parking spaces needed will not increase due to this application.*

They have parking at this unit as well, and also have a fully equipped cycle store room with cycle racks etc for employees to use. They also operate the Cycle to Work scheme with help to purchase bikes."

On this basis there is no objection on parking or highway safety grounds.

Sustainability

The Parish Council has questioned the number of A/C units proposed and has asked whether a more sustainable means of heating the building can be found. Policy 19 of the ALP seeks to promote low carbon and renewable technologies for all major applications.

This application is not a Major but discussion has taken place over this issue in the light of the Parish Council's comments and because 9no. A/C units could be considered to be excessive.

The applicant's agent has explained:

"We are completing the works on behalf of our client 'Pasante Healthcare'. They are a tenant of the building only and are completing these works for their own business use under the license to alter from the landlord. They will have to return the premises to its current state upon relinquishing the tenancy.

We had a look at various options for heating/cooling for the proposed offices:

Gas central heating via a boiler would not be economical due to there not being a gas supply to the building, and wouldn't provide the cooling facility the client requires. Electric wall heaters would be inefficient and also wouldn't provide a cooling facility.

A ground source heat pump wouldn't be feasible due to client's lease agreement from the freeholder landlord.

Therefore we would like to install the units with inverter heat pump units as per our original proposal. In addition to this system we are installing a heat recovery ventilation system to the first floor offices to both satisfy building control and retain the efficiency of the heating and cooling system. This system provides the heating and cooling the client requires and falls within their budget for the works. It is also easily removed upon completion of their tenure."

While not ideal, it is considered that there are valid reasons in this case to not require a more sustainable system.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit

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: 10 October 2019

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 10 October 2019