Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0320/14 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 58 Rosslyn Road, Shoreham-By-Sea West Sussex, BN43 6WP

Proposal: Single storey rear (south) extension to existing care home to provide 3 no. additional bedrooms

Date of site visit: 2 April 2014

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application property, known as Elreg House, is a former dwelling which has been used as a residential care home since 1962. It lies on the south side of Rosslyn Road, close to the junction with Rosslyn Avenue at the eastern end. The building has been extended on a number of previous occasions including with single storey flat roofed extensions at the rear. There are currently 20 single rooms and 4 shared rooms with 28 residents, many of whom have dementia or mental health care needs.

The proposal seeks to extend an existing single storey rear extension by constructing an additional 3 bedrooms. The extension will measure 8m deep, 8m wide (which is 1.5m wider than the existing extension to enable a corridor to be provided on the west side) and 3.5m high. The applicants' agent has submitted information in support of the proposal as follows:

"Elreg House is 1 of only 2 care homes in the Shoreham area (Lancing to Southwick) that actively receives state funded or local authority residents. Three quarters of the residents at the home are state funded although weekly rates for these residents is some £200 less than rates for private residents - hence the preference for the vast majority of local care homes to take private residents.

Elreg has an excellent reputation with local social and care workers and due to a massive shortage in bed spaces are receiving significant numbers of enquiries on a daily basis for beds for state funded residents that they cannot satisfy. Dementia and alzheimers are being diagnosed at earlier ages leading to significant additional pressure on bed spaces. Despite this high level of need and almost 100% occupancy the home is still staffed to a level that could support more beds (as per our previous submissions). This staff level and the increased care required for dementia/alzheimers patients is resulting in increased costs that are not sustainable with their current room numbers.

The 3 additional bedrooms will make a significant difference in retaining the jobs of current workers at the home and meeting the significant need in the Shoreham area, particularly for specialist state funded dementia care.

The rear garden is rarely used by residents if at all and still retains a good level of amenity space. The character is clearly one of a care home than a residential property."

The site lies within a residential area and occupies a larger plot than its neighbours.

Relevant site history

ADC/0377/10 - Extension of pitched roof (including front, rear and west side dormers) to form additional single-occupancy ensuite bedrooms (increasing number of bedrooms from 21 to 24) – approved

ADC/0008/10 - Enlarged replacement single-storey east side/rear extension to provide enlarged dining room and bedrooms with ensuite facilities (increasing total number of bedrooms from 19 to 21) - approved

SU/190/84 - Extension to provide 7 single rooms and alterations to common rooms – approved

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Highway Officer has no objection. There are no additional staff required for this expansion, and any increase in movements will not have a material impact on local highway safety, nor should there be any changes to the present parking arrangements.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH7, AH10 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising:
Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
Assessment of Saved Policies (ADC 2013)
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)
Planning Practice Guidance (CLG 2014)

Planning Assessment

Principle

Saved policy AH10 of the local plan relates to changes of use and conversions of dwellinghouses to residential care, nursing and other types of home. It states that permission will be granted provided that the buildings are within the built-up area with good access to community and public transport

facilities; the building is large and detached and has an extensive curtilage with adequate amenity space in the order of 10 square metres per resident; and sufficient separation from neighbouring dwellings; and access and car parking provision is acceptable under Policy AT12 (not a 'saved' policy). With regards to existing residential care/nursing homes, extensions will only be permitted where they comply fully with policy AH7.

Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, a loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. They should be of sympathetic design and materials to the original dwelling and the area in general, the proportion of the garden area taken by the proposal would not be excessive having regard to the character of the area.

Visual amenity

The existing property has previously been subject to a number of piecemeal developments to extend and increase the building footprint and the number of residents within the care home.

The current proposal would increase the length of the shorter of the existing rear extensions which is centrally positioned within the plot. Its length would not be as great as the extension on the eastern boundary and its appearance, whilst flat-roofed and functional, would be in keeping with the other rear extensions at the property. Being at the rear, it would not be visible from the street. In visual terms it is considered to be acceptable.

Residential amenity - neighbours

The extension is centrally located and, being single storey only, will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity. The dwellings to the east are screened by the existing extension which runs along the eastern boundary. It will be sufficiently distant from dwellings to the south and west to not cause harm.

Residential amenity – occupants

The main concern with regard to this proposal is the further loss of garden space available for the residents. The amount of usable garden area would be in the region of 200sqm which, with 31 residents proposed, equates to approximately 6.5sqm per resident which is below the minimum 10sqm specified in policy AH10. The site is already extensively built up and there is concern that this proposal represents an overdevelopment.

The applicants' agent has advised that the rear garden is rarely used by residents and the level of amenity space remaining is sufficient in their view. A decked area will remain directly at the rear of the building and an area of lawn will remain on the western side of the plot. In view of the circumstances of the business and the type of care provided at the premises, it is considered that sufficient justification for allowing a further extension has been provided, despite not meeting the amenity space standard referred to above. It is noted that the Care Quality Commission does not have any external space standards and the home is being run in a manner that is acceptable to them.

It is unlikely, however, that a further extension would be warranted, particularly where further garden space would be lost.

Access and parking

The Highway Officer does not consider that the additional 3 bedrooms would have an impact on parking or highway safety in this case.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development would result in the loss of further garden space available for use by residents but there is considered to be sufficient justification for a further expansion of the care home contrary to the standards specified in saved policy AH10. The extension will not detract from the local environment and can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It would consequently not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7) or the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Materials to match existing building
3. Approved plans

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: 6 May 2014

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 7 May 2014