Expiry Date - 15/02/2012

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number:
AWDM/1094/11

Recommendation – Approve Application

Site: **Kingdom Hall Wembley Gardens Lancing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Application for renewal of unimplemented outline permission ADC/0036/09 for redevelopment with 6 one-bedroom dwellings with 3 parking spaces (accessed from east side of Wembley Gardens)**

The Application

Outline planning permission was granted in March 2009 for the construction of 6 x 1-bed dwellings in a single storey building on the site of the Jehovah's Witnesses' meeting hall (ADC/0036/09). The site forms part of an extensive area of 'backland' development located between the rear of houses on the east side of Wembley Avenue and the west side of Annweir Avenue. It is served by an unadopted lane (named Wembley Gardens after the erection of flats at its southern end) which runs in a loop with the 'island' of development in the centre. The present application site comprises an L-shaped single-storey building, together with associated car parking, in total covering an area of 0.05 hectares. The site is approximately 22m wide and 24m deep at its widest point.

The adjoining site to the north contains a timber building which was formerly occupied as a repertory hall but which is now vacant. Further north is the former Ardmore Nursery School which is currently being redeveloped with houses.

The adjacent site to the south is used by the Kingston Bible Trust and further south is the former athletic club building which has been redeveloped with 6 one-bedroom terraced houses (L/147/03). This followed a previous application on that site for 6 one-bedroom flats which was refused on access grounds but subsequently allowed on appeal (L/191/01).

This application seeks to renew the outline consent for 6 dwellings with 3 parking spaces with access from the lane to the east of the site via Wembley Avenue.

Consultations and Representations

Consultations/Comments

West Sussex County Council – The Transport Planning Officer has no highway objection. Concerns had previously been raised as to the inadequate access arrangements for Wembley Gardens from Wembley Ave. The access at the northern end is of reasonable width with good visibility, however the access at the southern end, is narrow, does not allow for 2 cars to pass and is also a PROW, and therefore conflicts may arise between vehicles and pedestrians. However, these concerns have been considered at appeal on other applications for development in Wembley Gardens and the appeal has been allowed by the Inspector.

The existing use for the site is as a meeting place for Jehovah's Witnesses and has been used for religious worship since 1959. There are currently 10 parking spaces on the site.

The parking spaces are located to the north of the site and will result in vehicles reversing into the highway and consideration should be given for a turning area. However, given the level of traffic in Wembley Gardens, reversing movements in this location would be unlikely to result in any highway safety problems.

The level of parking of 0.5 spaces per dwelling is below WSCC recommended parking standards but given the proximity of the site to the town centre, public transport and other local amenities, it is acceptable to the highway authority. No TAD contribution is required after taking account of the existing use on the site.

Adur District Council – The Waste Strategy Manager has stated that this is a very difficult site to collect from. Adjacent roads should be properly resurfaced if bins are to be collected from the site.

The Environmental Health Officer has stated that the precautionary contaminated land informative be imposed on any consent

County Fire Officer – Previously advised that the proposed development may need to include the provision of 1 fire hydrant connected to adequate supplies of water for fire fighting. It should also include suitable access for fire brigade vehicles and equipment.

Environment Agency – No objection

Southern Water – No objection to the connection of foul discharge to the existing sewer in view of the small scale of the development. Surface water should not be discharged to the sewer and the means of surface water disposal should be the subject of a planning condition.

Lancing Parish Council - Committee was still unhappy with development of the site but had no grounds for a refusal. A concern however was the lack of on site parking which provided only 3 parking spaces which would likely exacerbate the parking issues on the surrounding streets.

Third Parties – 3 letters of objection received from the occupiers of 55 and 59 Wembley Avenue and from an unspecified address in Annweir Avenue:

- Inadequate parking, exacerbated by new houses built further along
- Inadequate access road which is narrow and poorly surfaced
- Additional traffic
- Overdevelopment
- General noise and disturbance during construction
- Loss of privacy

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2, AH5, ACS5 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: - Development Control No.2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats'
'Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards for New Homes' (ADC 2010)
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2003, amended 2010)
The Provision of Service Infrastructure Related to New Development in West Sussex – Part 1 (WSCC 1999)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS3 'Housing' (DCLG 2006, amended 2010)
PPG13 'Transport' (DTLR 2001, amended 2011)
PPG24 'Planning and Noise' (DoE 1994)
PPS25 'Planning and Flood Risk' (ODPM 2006) and Practice Guidance and Circular 04/06

Planning Assessment

Policies

The site is not identified for any particular use or development in the Local Plan. In principle, the proposed redevelopment for residential purposes accords with Local Plan policies because it is within the built up area of Lancing.

Policy AH2, related to housing development by way of infilling and redevelopment, expects development to be designed so that its appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live, is in keeping with and enhances the existing local environment with particular attention to the architectural form, height, materials, density and layout; respect for the natural features of the site, including trees, no unneighbourly effect on existing

dwellings by loss of privacy, light, outlook or open amenity space; adequate access and parking arrangements and accordance with adopted standards (in this case the Council's DC Standard No. 2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats' 1996.)

Local Plan policy ACS5 states that the loss of an existing community facility will not be permitted.

Government policy guidance in PPS3 encourages best use of urban land for housing development and a mixture of types to create a balanced community, at higher densities (although the requirement to avoid developments at less than 30 dwellings per hectare has now been deleted) and without rigid application of parking and amenity space standards. However, it also seeks to improve the quality and attractiveness of residential areas and urges imaginative designs and layouts which make more efficient and sustainable use of land without compromising the quality of the environment. PPS1 states "Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."

PPS3 states that Councils "should develop a shared vision with their local communities of the types of residential developments they wish to see and develop design policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the local area, aimed at:-

a. creating places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, are visually attractive, safe accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinct identity and maintain and improve the local character.
b. Promoting designs and layouts which make efficient and effective use of land, including encouraging innovative approaches to help deliver high quality outcomes."

PPS3 also states that Councils should "facilitate good design by identifying the distinctive features that define the character of a particular local area..... ...Careful attention to design is particularly important where the chosen local strategy involves intensification of the existing urban fabric... .....successful intensification need not mean high rise development or low quality accommodation with inappropriate space.....The density of existing development should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring a replication of existing style of form.....If done well, imaginative design and layout of new development can lead to a more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the local environment."

Principle of development

The site lies within the built up area and is not identified for any particular use or development in the Local Plan. The proposal is for redevelopment of a 'brownfield' site as provided for in Local Plan policies and the site enjoys a previous planning consent for residential redevelopment.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and there have been recent examples of the redevelopment of other 'island' sites in Wembley Gardens. There is no objection therefore to the principle of redevelopment of this site for housing purposes and it should be noted that the application is for a renewal of an outstanding consent.

Density, character and appearance

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character made up mainly of two-storey terraced houses. The proposed houses would be in a terraced form in a single, staggered block but would be single storey with a hipped roof. The submitted Design and Access Statement indicates that the building would have an eaves height of 2.2m and a ridge height of 7.2m. The rooms in the roof would be served by rooflights rather than dormers.

The houses are to be finished with brick elevations and tiled roofs to harmonise with the surrounding dwellings.

The dwellings are to be positioned towards the western edge of the site and oriented east-west with west facing amenity space. Vehicular access is from the east and 3 parking spaces are shown on the eastern boundary adjacent to a landscaped area and in front of a bin and cycle store.

The development represents a net density of approximately 120 dwellings per hectare which is well above the range of 30-50dph identified in PPS3. By comparison, it is higher than the development at Florence Cottages (100dph), the flats No's 1-10 Wembley Gardens (110dph), the recent approved development at Ardmore School (70dph) and the existing houses in Wembley and Annweir Avenues (approx 50dph).

Residential amenity

The proposed houses are not considered to have a harmful impact on the existing surrounding residential properties in Wembley Avenue, Annweir Avenue or Crabtree Lane. The buildings would be over 30m from the rear of the existing houses which is in excess of the Council's minimum standard of 22m distance between principal windows. With a height of 7.2m to the ridge (compared with 8m for Florence Cottages), they would not be overbearing and there would not be unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight for the existing houses. The recently approved houses on the Ardmore site had a ridge height of 7.1m.

Communal bin and cycle storage is to be provided in front of the houses on the eastern side of the site. The site is accessed from a narrow and partly unsurfaced access road. The Council's Waste Strategy Manager has advised that the site is unsuitable for a refuse collection from the site without the road being resurfaced and it is likely therefore that future occupiers will be required to place their bins on Annweir Avenue on collection days. A similar arrangement exists for the occupiers of Florence Cottages. While the issue of

resurfacing was raised with the applicant's agent (as has been agreed for the Ardmore site), there was no agreement to carry out such works. This is not considered to be a sufficient reason to withhold the granting of planning permission for the development.

It does not appear from the submitted indicative layout that any of the dwellings has a private garden. However, the application is outline only and does not include consideration of design or layout. It would be quite straightforward to amend the layout at the reserved matters stage to provide more rear amenity space.

The Council does not have any amenity space standards for one-bedroom houses, although for flats, there is a standard of 20sqm. It is considered that the amount of private garden space will be adequate, particularly as there is the potential for more space than with the previous approved scheme.

Access and parking

The site is served by a narrow access lane which cannot easily accommodate two passing cars. It is also largely unmade on the western side but on the eastern side there is a tarmac surface from the south which stops just short of the site entrance. The appeal decision in 2001 for 6 flats (now Florence Cottages) concluded that there would not be a significant increase in traffic movements or unacceptable detriment to highway safety as a result of the development. This followed a permission granted by Committee for flats 1-10 Wembley Gardens at the southern end many years earlier. Permission has formerly been granted for flats on the Kingdom Hall site and at Ardmore Nursery School and this current proposal falls to be considered in a similar light.

Only 3 parking spaces are to be provided. The County Highways Officer has no objection to the proposal in view of the site's sustainable location. No TAD contribution is required in spite of there being a previous requirement for a contribution for this site. It appears that in 2005 the existing use of the site was not taken into account when calculating the likely contribution and this has been now been rectified.

With regard to fire brigade access, there was previously no objection to the redevelopment of this site from the County Fire Officer. The current comments refer to the need for there to be suitable access and a fire hydrant on site. Access was considered to be achievable at the time of the previous application and any other necessary fire measures would be put in place under other legislation, i.e. the Building Regulations.

Recommendation

The proposed development is within the built-up area and would help meet the need for additional housing without detracting from existing local urban

environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the residential amenities of nearby properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AG3, AB25-27, AH2, AH5)

Subject to:-

1. C1A (amended) delete "access"
2. C8Gii
3. C12Aii (amended) roof; building
4. Demolition of existing buildings
5. C18N (amended) "proposed surface water drainage"
6. Plans

Informative: contaminated land

Case Officer Peter Barnett Date 30 January 2012

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