Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Refuse**
AWDM/1838/16

Site: **27 New Road, Shoreham By Sea**

Proposal: **Demolition of remaining section of front boundary wall to create larger parking area.**

Date of site visit: 10 January 2017

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: Site notice posted 22.12.2016

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a two storey dwelling on the north side of New Road. This is a predominantly residential part of the town with a mix of dwelling types and designs in New Road but with dwellings facing the road and on the north side, set back slightly from the street with small front gardens/courtyards to the frontage, and with a staggered building line to the street frontage. Rear gardens are relatively long to the north side of the street and enclosed with mature vegetation and trees. Dwellings to the immediate east are in terraces but of varied design, set in narrow plots, and with front forecourts enclosed by low boundary walls mainly in render, some with railings added providing some further enclosure. To the west low walls and railings continue at the adjoining dwelling and across an opening for a vehicular access there is a detached dwelling further to the west in Tarmount Lane with fencing enclosing the site. The site is within the Shoreham By Sea Conservation Area.

There is an existing hardstanding and vehicular access with an opening in the boundary wall of approximately 4.6 metres. Permission is sought for the demolition of the remaining section of front boundary wall to allow access to a larger parking area. The existing wall is approximately 1.3 metres in height with piers at approximately 1.7 metres in height. The wall and piers are finished in smooth painted render in white. The pier to each front corner would be retained as well as the side boundary walls.

Relevant site history

AWDM/0943/16 Proposed 3/4 bedroom two storey flat roof dwelling in the rear garden with one parking space. Refused 19.9.2016 for the following reasons:

The proposed dwelling, by reason of its design, form and location, would fragment and erode the verdant quality of this garden land and introduce a discordant form of development that would relate poorly to urban grain and to the character of the area, setting an undesirable precedent for further development to rear gardens which would not preserve or

enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area within which it is sited. Furthermore, the size and layout of the proposed dwelling would result in a poor living environment for future occupiers. As such the proposed development would be contrary to saved policy AH2 of the Adur Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

An appeal has been lodged with PINS.

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Highway Authority has provided the following comments:

West Sussex County Council, as the Local Highway Authority (LHA), was consulted previously on Highway Matters for this location under planning application AWDM/0943/16 for single dwelling to the rear of the site. Whilst the LHA raised no objections the Local Planning Authority (LPA) refused the application.

This current application involves the existing off street parking area to the frontage of no. 27. It is proposed that the remainder of the front boundary wall is demolished to provide improved access to the existing parking area. The LHA would not raise any grounds to resist the proposal. The applicant should contact the Area Engineer to obtain a licence for extension of the existing dropped kerb in this location.

INFORMATIVE
The applicant is advised to contact the Highway Licensing team (01243 642105) to obtain formal approval from the highway authority to carry out the site access works on the public highway.

Adur District Conservation Advisory Group: Approve

Representations
None

Relevant Planning Policies
Saved Local Plan policies (ADC 1996): AG1, AB4, AB6
Adur Local Plan (submission) 2016 policies: 1, 15, 16, 17
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment
The works proposed seek to enlarge the off street parking provision for the dwelling by way of widening the opening in the wall. The acceptability of this proposal is subject to the consideration of how these works will affect the character and appearance of the existing building within the street scene and Conservation Area. It is a statutory duty in determining proposals within a Conservation Area that consideration is given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the area.

The importance of good design is emphasised throughout the NPPF in order to establish a strong sense of place by responding to local character and

history, reflecting the identity of local surroundings to promote and reinforce local distinctiveness (paragraphs 58-60). This is also reflected in the emerging Local Plan, and Policy 15 which requires development to be of a high architectural quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area, making a positive contribution to the sense of place and distinctiveness of an area. Policy 16 advises that "The Council will conserve and enhance the historic environment and character of Adur, which includes historic buildings, features, archaeological assets and their settings."

As originally built, the properties on this section on the north side of New Road have low front boundary walls with large piers. Some of which have been altered with railings added or replaced with brick walls or, as at the application site, the height of the wall appears to have been extended. Despite these changes, the walls have maintained enclosure to the front garden areas and give the streetscene coherence.

On the south side, buildings largely front directly onto the pavement and where this pattern is interrupted by, for example, the car park entrance opposite the site or the lawned garden at the junction with Tarmount Lane, a low wall exists which continues the sense of enclosure.

The Conservation Area appraisal identifies the general plot characteristics in the conservation area and includes the following description:

The buildings within the conservation area are generally set forward on the sites, with a large number of terraced dwellings fronting directly onto the street and having front steps directly abutting the pavement. On other streets, the terraces are set back by a short distance and have small front fenced courtyards. The loss of small front gardens and fencing in favour of on site parking has the potential to cause significant damage to the appearance of these terraced properties.

The widening of the access by removal of the remaining section of front boundary wall at 27 New Road is considered to be in conflict with the established character of the streetscene.

Further to the west in Tarmount Lane wider open frontages and lack of continuity of boundary walls in places, has harmed the original character of the streetscene giving a more open and stark appearance to site frontages and lack of coherence with the rest of the street. At the application site, it would be essentially the whole frontage of the width of the building that would be opened up to allow access to parking if permission was granted. The permanent loss of the boundary wall to No.27 in its entirety would further erode the character of the streetscene contributing to a lack of coherence for this section of the street also and the wider conservation area.

In a similar case in Worthing (AWDM/0333/16) that has been the subject of a recent appeal (M3835/W/16/3158139), that involved the partial demolition of a front boundary wall in a conservation area where walls of various designs and materials made up part of the established character of the streetscene, in dismissing the appeal the Inspector noted that the boundary enclosures 'collectively make a positive contribution to the attractiveness of the streetscene and the overall character appearance of the Conservation Area'

and considered that the removal of a section of wall 'would materially harm the traditional appearance of the frontage of this property'.

In this case the existing wall at the application site makes a valuable contribution to the coherence of the street. The substantial opening and resultant loss of enclosure would be harmful to the character of the building and the streetscene in general and, with an exposed hardstanding giving an open and stark appearance, would result in a lack of coherence to the streetscene and would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Although the vehicular access is located in close proximity to the junction of Tarmount Lane, the Highway Authority has not raised any objection to the application in terms of highway safety.

Recommendation

REFUSE

For the following reasons:
The loss of front boundary wall to allow a larger parking area would represent an unsympathetic form of development, giving an open and stark appearance to the street, resulting in a lack of coherence to the streetscene, which would undermine and weaken the prevailing character of the locality and be detrimental to the visual amenities of the streetscene. The proposal would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character of the Shoreham By Sea Conservation Area and as such the proposal would be contrary to saved policies AB4 and AB6 of the Adur Local Plan, policies 15, 16 and 17 of the Submission Adur Local Plan 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative:
1. Drawing numbers
2. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, allowing the Applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal. The Local Planning Authority is willing to meet with the Applicant to discuss the best course of action and is also willing to provide pre-application advice in respect of any future application for a revised development.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Rebekah Smith Date: 30 January 2017

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 31 January 2017