Application Number: ADC/0375/07 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: **Burrscrofte, Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea**

Proposal: **Change of use from Care Home to offices (Use Class B1) including use for voluntary and community sector organisations (WSCC Regulation 4 application)**

The Application

The application site is located at the corner of Western Road and Pond Road in central Shoreham, within Shoreham Conservation Area. The existing building is a flat roofed, three-storey former care home owned by West Sussex County Council. It has a small car park to the front and a garden area to the rear with mature trees.

Adjacent to the site to the south is Shoreham Health Centre and the Library. On the opposite side of Pond Road lies the Shoreham Centre (community centre) and a prefabricated office building occupied by CAB. On the opposite side of Western Road to the north is the Baptist church. Behind the rear garden of Burrscrofte there is a footpath from Western Road to the Health Centre. Beyond this, there is a wall on a bank, with various trees and shrubs screening the side elevation of the residential property known as Westcroft from the site. Westcroft is located some 30m from the rear of Burrscrofte.

The proposal is to change the use of the building from the former care home use to offices for voluntary and public sector organisations. The organisations include:-

Age Concern
British Red Cross
Adur Learning Exchange
Home Front
Carers Support
4–Sight
Talking Pages
Adur Special Needs
Citizens Advice Bureau
Halcyon Club
Community Transport including Dial-a-Ride
Adur Council for Voluntary Services (over 300 voluntary and community sector members).

Eight of these organisations are currently located in unsuitable Council premises at 2-8 Tarmount Lane, and three more have been temporarily displaced from a 'portakabin' building adjoining the Pond Road car park, while the Citizens Advice Bureau remain in another 'portakabin' building on the west side of Pond Road. In all cases the tenancies have expired and the occupiers

are 'holding over' pending a solution being found to alternative accommodation.

On 12 June 2007 this matter was reported to the Housing and Central Services Committee, which was advised that a refurbishment scheme had been prepared by officers and that external grant funding has been secured, which is conditional upon it being expended by March 2008. In this respect Burrscrofte is the Council's preferred option in creating a 'community hub' to meet key Shoreham Renaissance objectives

Consultations and Representations

County Transport Planning Services: To be reported. No obj

Director of Services: The Environmental Health Officer has no objection.

Adur District Conservation Advisory Group: No objection.

Third Parties: To be reported. None. No third party representations have as yet been received.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (2005): LOC1, CH4, NE11, NE13, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5
Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (1996): AG1, AB3-4, AT12, AE4, ACS5
Adur Development Plan – Submission Core Strategy 2006-26 (ADC 2007): R1, STC1, STC3, CI1, T3-4, ENV10
'A Strategy for Shoreham Renaissance' (2006)
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards & Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2003 & ADC 2004)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS6 'Planning for Town Centres' (ODPM 2005)
PPG13 'Transport' (DTLR 2001)
PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (DoE 1994)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The site is not identified for any particular use or development in the Local Plan and is outside the areas specifically identified for office use (which are within the shopping area). Policy AG1 provides for development within the built-up area provided it does not detract from the existing urban environment. Policy AB6 relates to the alteration and change of use of buildings in the Conservation Area and seeks the retention of original features and the removal of unsympathetic features.

Policies ACS5 and NE11 supports the development, extension or improvement of community facilities within the built-up area, provided it accords with other Local Plan policies. Policies AT12, DEV4 and DEV5 require development to have safe and adequate access and parking, to be accessible to public transport, and to have safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities.

Submission Core Strategy Policy CI1 seeks to improve facilities to meet the growing needs of the community (including care and support facilities).

The Shoreham Renaissance Strategy, which accords with PPS6, seeks to provide accessible and modern community services and recognises the Pond Road area as the community heart of Shoreham. The strong community spirit of Shoreham is attributed to the concentration of community uses in the town centre. The Strategy states that the area should continue to be a hub for community uses.

The Use

The building has become surplus to the requirements of West Sussex County Council in its former use as a care home. Given its location in the Pond Road area where community facilities are already concentrated, it is considered an appropriate reuse of the building to provide improved office facilities for voluntary and community sector groups that are important to community support in the district.

Use Class B1 comprises three parts:- a) as an office other than within Class A2 (financial and professional services); b) for the research and development of products or processes; or c) for light industrial purposes. In all cases, B1 use is, by definition, that which can be carried out in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.

It is considered that use for B1 office-type purposes is acceptable as it would be consistent with maintaining the viability and vitality of the town centre and without adversely affecting the character of the Conservation Area or the amenities of residential accommodation in the vicinity. Parking and pedestrian access arrangements are considered satisfactory.

Visual Amenity

The existing building is of no architectural merit and is a relatively characterless modern building not contributing to the Conservation Area. No alterations to the external appearance are proposed and the existing access and parking area will be utilised. There would be no impact on visual amenity.

Residential Amenity

As stated above, B1 uses are compatible with residential uses. In this case the closest residential unit is Westcroft to the rear of the site, which is some

30m away and as a result there would be no significant impact on residential amenity.

Access and Parking

Comments from WSCC Transport Planning Services are awaited.

The existing access and parking area will be retained. 7 car parking bays in the existing car park will be available for use by the occupying organisations. The other 4 spaces on the right hand side of the car park are permanently allocated for use by the Health Centre. In addition, another 10-12 spaces could be made available to the occupying organisations in the extended Pond Road car park, probably on a season ticket basis.

The site is well located for easy access from the town centre on foot or bicycle and is in easy reach of the train station and bus routes. It is therefore considered a highly sustainable location both from the point of view of community users and of staff.

It is not clear whether there would be any parking requirement for Community Transport vehicles and if so whether these would be stored elsewhere. Further details have been requested.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is located in a town centre location and would enhance town centre facilities and help meet the needs of the local community and community service providers without detracting from the local environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties, without detraction from highway safety, and without detriment to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It consequently would not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, ACS5, AE4, AB2-3, AB6, AT12) and the west Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (LOC1, DEV1, DEV4-5, NE11, NE13).

Subject to: -

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)

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