Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1804/14 Recommendation – Approve

Site: **Builders Store Rear of 4 To 14 Southview Road, Southwick Brighton, West Sussex, BN42 4TU**

Proposal: **Minor material amendment to approved application AWDM/0366/13 for the addition of a dummy chimney; minor internal amendments; new lobby porch; sun tubes, velux rooflights to north, south and west elevations (all at least 1.8m above floor level) and western boundary wall to be rebuilt to a height of 2.4m with 0.6m trellis (variation to conditions 2 and 9)**

Date of site visit:

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a 'backland' site to the rear (east) of 4-12 Southview Road and which is also surrounded by residential development to the north east (in Roman Way) and south (in Roman Crescent). The site is in use as a yard for SD Holdings, a property rental business, and contains a two storey brick building on the eastern boundary which is used for storage of building materials and as a workshop. It has a floor area of approximately 180sqm. The site is accessed from a narrow drive between 2A and 4 Southview Road. The yard is rather untidy and parking is informally laid out.

Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a replacement two storey building containing offices and storage for SD Holdings on the western boundary, with a floor area of approximately 236sqm (AWDM/0366/13).

The proposed building as approved measured 15m wide, 6.5m deep at its southern end and 9.5m deep at its northern end. It had a pitched roof with a ridge height of 7.2m rising to 7.5m at its northern end. The building will run north-south along the western boundary. This application seeks approval for several minor amendments to include as follows:

- Addition of a dummy feature chimney
- Addition of rooflights to north, south and west roofslopes to provide daylighting for offices, WC and kitchen
- New flat-roofed lobby porch at entrance on east elevation to measure 2.7m wide, 2.3m deep and 3.4m high
- Additional first floor window to front
- Alteration to window design
- Addition of sun tubes to west (rear) roofslope

- Rear (west) boundary wall to be 2.4m with a 0.6m high trellis instead of a 3m high wall

The site abuts the Conservation Area to the south.

Relevant site history

Planning permission was granted in 1990 (for the same applicants) for a two storey office extension to the existing building along the northern boundary and the conversion of the existing building to offices (SU/46/90) but this was never implemented.

AWDM/0366/13 – as above.

Consultations

West Sussex County Council – No highway objection.

Adur and Worthing Councils: The EHO previously recommended a precautionary condition relating to possible contamination. Also requested a condition requiring details of any security lights/parking lights to be submitted and agreed prior to installation and an informative advising the applicant to contact environmental health for a demolition notice under the Building Act 1984 prior to any demolition taking place.

Representations

2 letters of objection received from occupiers of 10 and 14 Southview Road:

- Concerned that existing wall on northern boundary of site will be replaced with fencing, or partly replaced resulting in patchwork of brick and fencing. This will be unacceptable visually and would harm existing character of walled garden.

- Concerned about possible loss of privacy from rooflights

- Loss of value

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AE16
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises alterations and improvements of existing business premises and can be supported in principle under saved Local Plan policy

AE16. The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and consideration of car parking/access.

Visual amenity

The proposed building is 2 storeys high with a hipped roof and has a domestic appearance, with a garage door, entrance porch and first floor windows set within the eaves. It will be 1.8m taller than the existing building at its highest point (but with a 1m lower eaves height) and will be a more substantial built form with a larger footprint. However, it will be hidden from public view, being located within a backland site which is not visible from any of the surrounding roads. It will not detract from the setting of the Conservation Area and will result in a 'tidying up' of the existing yard.

The alterations to the building are relatively minor in nature and will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

Residential amenity

The site is surrounded by residential properties and the main consideration is the impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. In Southview Road to the west the existing building forms the boundary with nos. 4-12. It is to be demolished and the new building will be 1.2m further from the boundary. A new 3m high wall was to be constructed to ensure the privacy and security of those residents to the west. This is proposed to be amended to a 2.4m high wall with a 0.6m trellis above. The applicants have stated that the existing wall can be retained at a height of 2.4m with a trellis which in their view will be visually preferable and more feasible structurally than a 3m wall. It is considered that this is an acceptable approach as it will continue to provide a reasonable boundary with the potential for some screen planting on the trellis to soften the impact. To the north, the existing boundary wall is to be retained and strengthened where necessary.

The building will be higher and wider than the existing workshop but much of this additional bulk is formed by the roof which will pitch away from the boundary which will help to reduce the impact on the occupiers to the west. The increased separation from the boundary will ensure a distance of approximately 16m to the rear of the Southview Road houses which will further help to mitigate the impact on light and outlook. A first floor window on the west elevation has been omitted and replaced with a rooflight. As with all proposed rooflights on the north, south and west elevations, they will have their lower edge 1.8m above the internal room level to prevent overlooking. No loss of privacy or amenity is anticipated as a result of these amendments therefore.

To the east, the site is abutted by dwellings in Roman Way, the most affected of which is No. 35. That dwelling is positioned north east of the site rather than directly behind it and views from the new building will be indirect rather than towards the private rooms of No.35. A separation distance of 22m will remain between the proposed building and the rear of No.35 which meets the accepted minimum distance for facing principal windows. The site is also reasonably well screened (particularly during the summer months when the boundary trees within the garden of No. 35 are in leaf). No.37 Roman Way is

situated further north and is considered to be less affected in view of the distance and angle involved.

To the south the dwellings in Roman Crescent are similarly not considered to be adversely affected given the orientation and distance involved.

Concern has been expressed at the use of the building as a workshop. However, the existing building has a workshop use and is also used for storage. The proposed floor plans show a predominantly office use of the building with an area designated for 'parking/storage' on the ground floor. While there may be some workshop activity in this area it would be restricted by condition to fall within Use Class B1only, which is activity that can be carried out in a residential area without causing disturbance. The hours of use can also be restricted. In view of the proximity to residential properties it is also considered reasonable and necessary to make this a personal permission to SD Holdings Ltd as another user could introduce a more intensive form of use of the site.

Accessibility and parking

The development will utilise the existing single track access from Southview Road, which runs between Nos. 2a and 4. Visibility has been improved at the access junction with Southview Road by lowering the boundary wall at 2a and WSCC has no objection. The use is existing and any intensification is expected to be minor. The query about vibration damage to the buildings either side of the access is a civil rather than planning matter.

The current plans show a change to the parking layout, with the spaces brought closer to the north and east boundaries, reducing the area available for landscaping. The existing car park/yard does not contain any planting and there is adequate hedging on the boundary and tree screening within neighbouring gardens to soften the impact of the new building. The revised location of the car parking spaces will not cause any material increase in noise disturbance to neighbours.

Ecology

Several representations received for the original application queried whether there are bats roosting in the existing building. The applicants commissioned an ecological survey which confirms that no evidence of bats was found.

Recommendation

Subject to completion of a Deed of Variation to the previous section 106 Obligation undertaking to pay the sustainable transport contribution of £4,009,

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Materials for building

4. No lighting without consent
5. B1 use only and personal to SD Holdings
6. Hours of use 8am - 6pm Monday – Friday; 8.30am -1pm Saturdays. No working Sundays or Public Holidays
7. Obscure glaze and fix shut first floor window on west elevation
8. Remove PD rights for office/industrial buildings
9. Wall to be rebuilt to 2.4m with 600mm trellis prior to occupation
10. Visibility splay to be kept below 600mm
11. Parking spaces to be provided
12. Existing buildings removed and all debris removed from site
13. Landscaping
14. Hours of construction 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday; 8am -1pm Saturdays only

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.

Informative: Precautionary contamination
Informative: Demolition Notice

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 23 February 2015

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 23 February 2015