Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0117/23 Recommendation: Approve

Site: Lancing Sea Scout Group, 79 - 81 Manor Road, Lancing

Proposal: Proposed part single storey/part two storey replacement scout hut.

Date of Site Visit: April 4th 2023

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

The application relates to the site of the Lancing Sea Scout Group's scout hut, off Manor Road. It is proposed to demolish the existing hut and construct a larger replacement hut.

The hut sits on a backland site at the rear of dwellings in Manor Road and Upper West Lane. There is a cemetery to the south. Vinehaven, a bungalow, sits close to the eastern boundary in line with the proposed position of the building. It has a rear conservatory constructed almost up to the boundary. Access is from Manor Road via a driveway between 77 and 83 Manor Road. In addition to the original hut, there is an 'annex' attached to the south side, forming an L-shape, along the north and east part of the site. There are garage/storage buildings to the east of the building and other storage buildings on the southern boundary.

The existing hut was formerly in use as the Parish Hall and dates back to the First World War when it was an army barracks. Its age and condition has prompted the scout group to seek a more modern facility. It has been designed to be larger and taller to allow for a multi-use facility, not just for the scouts but for the wider community. The supporting information submitted with the application states that the existing floor area of the buildings on site is 285sqm with the proposal increasing to 329sqm.

The proposal will remove the hut and storage buildings (apart from the garages to the east) and construct a new hall at the southern end of the site. It will run along most of the southern boundary, measuring 24m wide and 18.6m deep. It will have a staggered east elevation with a compound formed to the east between the building and the boundary. The building will have a ridge height of 7.7m with the taller part of the building on the west side. It will step down to a single storey form on the east

side. The height is required as the hall incorporates a climbing-wall, plus racquet and ball-sports.

The floor plans show a main hall, with smaller rooms, a kitchen, toilets, workshop and storage on the ground floor with a meeting room and store at first floor on the western side of the building only.

The main site lies outside of the Manor Conservation Area but the access road is within. The development therefore affects the setting of the Conservation Area.

Planning History:

L/133/92 - Use for play group. Refused on grounds of lack of parking and inadequate access

L/113/95 - New Double Garage And Extension To Existing Garage- approved

Consultations:

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways Authority** has no objection. No alterations are proposed to the existing vehicular access arrangement. Whilst larger than the existing, the LHA does not anticipate that the replacement scout hut would generate a significant material intensification of movements to or from the site, over what the site currently generates.
An inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last five years reveals no recorded injury accidents within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing access is operating unsafely or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.
Three car parking spaces are proposed to serve the site, although there appears to be space for two or three additional cars fronting the garages if required. From inspection of the plans, the proposed parking bays are suitably sized and on-site turning appears achievable. Storage space is available on-site for the secure storage of cycles.
In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.
Recommend conditions to secure car and cycle parking

Adur and Worthing Councils: Public Health: No adverse comments

Southern Water: Standard advice

ADCAG: Members are concerned to learn that a group of badgers reside on this land & under the existing hut. Whilst they feel it is imperative to support groups such as the Sea Scouts, they are also equally concerned about the badgers which, as is well known, are protected by law. Members feel that we should await any decision until such time a mutually satisfactory solution can be found. We would respectfully request that we are kept in the loop once such a solution has been found, when we will of course submit our recommendation.

Lancing Parish Council: Support the application

Natural England: Applicants should apply for a licence to exclude badgers from active setts, after which the setts would be permanently closed.

Ecology Consultant: No Habitats of Principal Importance are present within the development area and the area subject to survey is predominantly comprised of hardstanding, modified grassland and buildings. These are habitats of limited value in their own right and their loss to the proposed development is not likely to be significant in a local context.
It is noted that there is no Biodiversity Net Gain requirement for this application as it was submitted in January 2023, before the Environment Act regulations came into force. However, in accordance with Policies 30 and 31 of the Adur Local Plan 2017 and the 2024 NPPF, measures should be included within the scheme to ensure biodiversity gains are provided within the scheme to include:
- At least 2 bat boxes installed at least four metres above ground level and away from windows, on the south and/or west facing elevations of buildings or trees and maintained thereafter.
- At least 2 bird boxes installed at least 1m apart, directly under the eaves and away from windows on the north and/or east elevations of buildings or trees and maintained thereafter.
- Any new fencing must have accessible Hedgehog holes, measuring 13cm x 13cm to allow the movement of Hedgehogs into and out of the site.
- 1 hibernacula/log pile as a resting place for reptiles and/ or amphibians constructed on the site boundary.

The Badger surveys carried out identified the presence of active Badger setts within and adjacent to the site, including a main sett (Sett 3), annex sett (Sett 1), and two outlier setts (Setts 4 and 5) within the site and a possible annex sett (Sett 4) in an adjacent garden. In view of the development proposals for the site it is considered that the works will result in loss of setts present, including the loss of a high-status main sett. It is subsequently recommended that measures to protect Badgers through the course of construction are detailed within a Detailed Badger Mitigation Strategy. In addition, within this Detailed Badger Mitigation Strategy a replacement Badger sett should be provided if it is not possible to retain the main Badger sett, free from significant disturbance, in situ.

Advice:

- Prior to construction commencing at the site, the following documents should be provided:

 A Detailed Badger Mitigation Strategy (including the location of a replacement Badger sett, if applicable) to demonstrate how Badgers associated with the site will be protected throughout the development.

 An Ecological Protection and Mitigation Plan to demonstrate how sensitive on-site species, including Badgers, reptiles and nesting birds, will be protected throughout development. The Ecological Protection and Mitigation Plan should also include details of establishment and long-term maintenance of new habitats and ecological features (including provision of bat and bird boxes, reptile log pile/hibernacula, insect hotel and Hedgehog holes) proposed as part of the development.

 If new external lighting is proposed, a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Scheme following standard guidelines should be provided which identifies the environmentally sensitive zones within the site and demonstrates how light spillage into these zones will be avoided by the proposed lighting scheme.

Provision of this information could be subject of condition(s) of planning consent.

Representations

45 letters of support, mainly from parents of children who use the existing hut:

- Scouts are an integral part of the local community and provide much needed activities for the youth of Lancing and Sompting
- Existing hut is not fit for purpose, needs extensive repairs and costly to heat and run
- New hut would have wider community benefits

2 letters of objection from the occupiers of 40, 71 Manor Road:

- Poor visibility at site exit onto Manor Road
- Lack of parking
- Increased traffic
- No pavement on south side of Manor Road
- Limited access for construction vehicles
- Increased noise, disturbance and smells due to residents parking on Manor Road
- Late evening disturbance and when functions are held
- Busy road
- Sale of Parish Hall in Mill Road might lead to increased use of this facility thus increasing footfall and traffic

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15, 17, 18, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36
Sustainable Energy SPD (August 2019)
Adur Planning and Climate Change Checklist (June 2021)
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site lies within the built up area boundary where development is acceptable in principle. Policy 33 supports improvements to existing community facilities.

The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers, the effect on the character and appearance of the area and parking and highway considerations.

Visual amenity and impact on setting of Conservation Area

The new building is significantly larger than the existing and is located at the southern end of the site rather than towards the north. The applicants have explained that a larger hall is needed to accommodate a climbing wall and racquet sports that they would like to do within the hall. As a result, it has a proposed height of 7.7m compared with the existing 6m high hall. The footprint is also bigger (329sqm compared with 285sqm) but it will enable multi-use of the hall by various scout age groups and other community groups, such as Guides, mother and toddler groups and others.

The proposed hall has its main bulk in the south/west corner of the site and steps down in height towards the eastern boundary. It abuts the cemetery to the south and will be glimpsed from the A27 to the south, but largely screened by trees and other intervening vegetation. From the north, it will sit behind the houses that front Manor Road and will be sufficiently distant from public views to not have an adverse impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.

The site will be more developed than currently as the existing garages are shown as being retained and there will be a storage compound to the north and east of the hall. Three parking spaces are shown to the north and only a limited grassed area will remain, compared with existing. The applicants have explained that there is no requirement for a large outdoor area as Lancing Manor and the South Downs are within walking distance.

The hall is to be finished in cavity brickwork faced with white render on the rear, east and west side walls. The front and side returns are to be clad in blue coloured metal

cladding. The roof will be finished in aluminium sheets. Final details of the materials are to be secured by condition to ensure they are appropriate for the area.

Subject to final details of materials, it is not considered that the development will result in significant or adverse visual harm to the area.

Residential amenity

The site sits to the rear of three bungalows (75, 75a and 77 Manor Road). The new hall will be further from the rear boundary of those properties and there will be a distance of approximately 19m from the boundary to the north face of the hall. First floor windows are shown in the north elevation which are for light to the hall only and will be fixed and obscure glazed.

There is another bungalow to the west of the access road (No. 83), the boundary of which runs along the western side of the site. The new hall will be 1.6m from the boundary and its largest elevation will run 1.6m along the length of the boundary, at least 25m from the rear of No.83. There is substantial tree screening between the hall and bungalow. The windows at first floor on the Western elevation are to be obscure glazed with limited opening for ventilation only.

To the east, a bungalow (Vinehaven) sits very close to the site boundary and has several windows and a conservatory facing west. The proposed hall will be approximately 1.8m from the boundary at its closest point. That element of the hall will be 4m high and 4.8m wide before it steps back by 3.9m and rises to 5m for a depth of 6.8m. The tallest element of the hall is 11.8m from the boundary with Vinehaven, with the ridge being around 20m from the boundary. Consequently, while it will introduce a large building directly behind Vinehaven, it is considered that it has been designed to reduce the impact on light and outlook for that property by ensuring that the tallest part of the hall is furthest away. No objection has been received from the occupiers of Vinehaven and, on balance, it is not considered that there will be an adverse impact on residential amenity arising from this development.

In terms of hours of use, the hall will be used by the scouts and other community groups with the applicants stating that they would like opening hours 0900 hrs to 2200 hrs, which is considered to be reasonable.

Parking and access

3 parking spaces are to be provided on site. There is no highway objection to this level of provision and there is additional space for two or three additional cars in front of the retained garages if required. Storage space is also available on-site for cycles. The majority of scouts using the facility are likely to live within walking distance or will be dropped off on the highway.

In terms of use, the applicants have stated that other groups will be using the hall when it is not in use by the scouts. This is likely to result in a slightly more intensive use of the site than existing and objections have been received on highway grounds from a couple of local residents.

The local highway authority does not anticipate that the replacement hall would generate a significant material intensification of movements to or from the site, over what the site currently generates and has not objected to the application.

Ecology

The applicants have had a badger survey and ecological assessment carried out due to the suspected presence of badger setts on the site. The surveys have confirmed that four badger setts were identified within the site. A further sett was identified within a residential garden to the east of the site, with an entrance extending into the site. The surveys have also confirmed the movement of badgers across the site and an active sett adjacent to the site. Further surveys are required to determine whether the setts within the site are active. Due to the proximity to the site the works will result in disturbance to badgers occupying sett 2 adjacent to the site. Depending on the results of further surveys, works may also result in damage to setts within the site. As such, a 'licence to interfere with a badger sett for the purposes of development' is required from Natural England to proceed legally as there is limited opportunity to redesign the hall or reposition it.

The Council has sought independent ecological advice and their recommendations are set out in the Consultations section of this report. In summary, a detailed Badger Mitigation Strategy (including the location of a replacement Badger sett, if applicable) will be required to be submitted to demonstrate how badgers will be protected throughout the development.

They have also recommended that an Ecological Protection and Mitigation Plan to demonstrate how sensitive on-site species, including Badgers, reptiles and nesting birds, will be protected throughout the development. Details of proposals to establish and maintain new habitats and ecological features (including provision of bat and bird boxes, reptile log pile/hibernacula, insect hotel and hedgehog holes) are required.

It is recommended that these measures are secured by condition.

Sustainability

No details of sustainability measures have been provided but the new hall will be more energy efficient than the existing. Final details can be required by condition.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Materials to be approved
4. No part of the development shall be first occupied until the car parking has been constructed in accordance with the approved site plan. These spaces shall thereafter be retained at all times for their designated purpose
5. No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority
6. No development or any preparatory work (including demolition or site clearance) shall take place until a detailed badger mitigation strategy (including the location of a replacement badger sett, if applicable), to demonstrate how badgers associated with the site will be protected throughout the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall thereafter not be implemented other than in complete accordance with the approved details. The mitigation plan shall include a copy of the licence to interfere with the badger sett secured from Natural England, with a proposed schedule of works.
7. No development or any preparatory work shall take place until an Ecological Protection and Mitigation Plan to demonstrate how sensitive on-site species, including badgers, reptiles and nesting birds, will be protected throughout the development. The Ecological Protection and Mitigation Plan should also include details of the establishment and long-term maintenance of new habitats and ecological features (including the provision of bat and bird boxes, reptile log pile/hibernacula, insect hotel and Hedgehog holes) proposed as part of the development. The development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved Plan.
8. No external lighting shall be installed unless in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any lighting shall conform to a Wildlife Friendly Lighting Scheme following standard guidelines which identifies the environmentally sensitive zones within the site and demonstrates how light spillage into these zones will be avoided by the proposed lighting scheme.
9. Use restriction - as scout and community hall only (Class F2b)
10. Hours of opening - 9am-10pm every day

11. CMP
12. Hours of construction
13. Obscure glaze windows on north and west elevations
14. Details of sustainability measures

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation Y

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: 25 February 2025

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 25.02.2025