Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0472/16 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 6 Roberts Road Lancing West Sussex BN15 8AR

Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of block of four flats with four parking spaces on frontage (re-submission of AWDM/1586/15).

Date of site visit: 13.01.2016 (AWDM/1586/15)

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: Y – Corrected Description

The application relates to a rectangular-shaped plot measuring 30m deep x 12.4m wide on the north side of Robert Road. The plot is currently vacant, the former chalet dwelling on the site having been demolished last year (without Prior Approval).

Roberts Road is a quiet residential road in South Lancing made up of an eclectic mix of dwelling types including some traditional Victorian/Edwardian terraces and various examples of early, mid and late-20C houses, bungalows and domestic-scale flat blocks in a diverse range of traditional and contemporary styles. Materials are mostly brick or render or a combination of both. There is no strong building line on either side of the road or notable pattern of development. However, frontages typically consist of planted front gardens enclosed by low boundary walls or fences. The former chalet was one of the few remaining older dwellings of its type in the road. A hedge which enclosed the front garden has been grubbed out.

The carriageway is lined by grass verges on either side but is relatively narrow in width with on-street parking on the south side only. Bollards have been planted in parts of the verge on the north side to prevent vehicles parking on them.

Adjoining to the east is a 2-storey flat building with single-storey rear protrusion, comprising 5 flats. It was completed approximately 3-4 years ago. The frontage is laid out as 4 parking spaces with the access onto Roberts Road extending virtually the entire width of the plot.

Adjoining to the west, Clements also comprises a 2-storey flat building dating from the mid-1970's having an unusual mono-pitched roof design. It has no off-street parking provision.

The Council-owned public car park adjoins to the north.

The road slopes down gently from west to east

Proposal

Permission is sought to erect a block of 4 1-bedroom flats within a 2-storey building with a pitched and hipped roof 8.6m high. The proposed flat building would have a rectangular footprint 10.5m x 11.8m, set back 6.2m from the back edge of the footway. It would extend deeper into the site than either Clements or the building at No.7, with a gap of 11m to the rear boundary. The frontage would be laid out to provide 4 parking spaces with a 10.4m wide access onto Roberts Road. The submitted drawings show a minimum width of 1m between the east and west side walls of the main 2-storey element and the side boundaries.

Relevant Planning History:

6 Roberts Road: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of block of five flats with four parking spaces on frontage (AWDM/1586/15). Refused 26.01.2016 on the ground:

"The proposed development constitutes an unacceptable overdevelopment of the site by reason of its large plot coverage, poor layout, access and parking arrangements which would provide for an unsatisfactory standard of residential environment for the future occupiers and result in a reduction in the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. In addition, the poor architectural composition and detailed design of the building together with the layout of parking on the frontage and hard-surfaced areas fail to satisfactorily respond to important elements of local character and distinctiveness and would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area. The proposed development is therefore contrary to saved Adur Local Plan policy AH2, policy 15 of the Proposed Submission Adur Local Plan and the NPPF."

7 Roberts Road: Demolition of bungalow and erection of 5 x 1-bedroom flats with 3 parking spaces and rear cycle store (L/94/05/TP refers).

Consultations:

WSCC: The Highway Authority has raised no objection in principle, commenting:-

"West Sussex County Council was consulted previously on Highway Matters for the erection of 5 flats served by 4 car parking spaces at this location under planning reference AWDM/1586/15. No anticipated highway safety or capacity concerns were raised to the proposal. The application was refused by the LPA citing overdevelopment. The scheme has now been resubmitted and reduced in size to 4 x 1 bed flats.

<u>Context</u>
This application seeks the redevelopment of 6 Roberts Road, Lancing and the erection of 4 x 1 bed flats. Roberts Road is an unclassified road served with pedestrian footways. The proposal seeks to install a vehicle crossover across the frontage of the site in order to provide four off street car parking spaces to serve the development. It is noted that the site is on the northern side of Roberts Road, which due to the restricted nature of Roberts Road is not used for on street car parking.

Access
The proposal seeks to install a vehicle crossover across the frontage of the site in order to create four off street car parking spaces arranged in a bay formation. No turn on site would be provided. I note other neighbouring points of access on the northern side of Roberts Road operate on the same basis. I have checked the most recently available personal injury accident data and these neighbouring points of access appear to be operating safety.

The formation of the access will require the removal of bollards that appear to be placed to prohibit vehicle parking on the highways verge on the northern side of Roberts Road. The crossover would also be within 1.5 metres of an existing street lighting column; this may need to be relocated at the applicant's expense.

The crossover works must be constructed to a speciation obtained from WSCC Highways and implemented under licence. While the crossover would be wider than WSCC would normally grant a licence to implement it was previously established when consulting with regard to AWDM/1586/15 that implementation of the extended crossover would not be resisted at the licensing stage.

Parking
The proposal seeks to install a vehicle crossover across the frontage of the site in order to create four off street car parking spaces. The spaces appear to be appropriately sized (2.4 x 4.8 metres) based on the plans provided.

Using the WSCC car parking demand calculator, on the basis that each flat will be allocated one space each, it would be anticipated that a development of this size in this location would attract the demand for five vehicular spaces. However consideration needs to be given to the existing dwelling on site which would have generated a parking demand without the benefit of any off street car parking. It should be noted that that due to the restricted nature of Roberts Road the carriageway fronting the site is not used for on street car parking. I would be minded to conclude that the impact towards on-street car parking as a result of this development would be null.

It would appear that a shared cycle provision is proposed, this should be secure and covered and large enough to store at least 2 cycles.

Conclusion
In conclusion no anticipated highway safety or capacity concerns would be raised to this proposal."

Conditions relating to parking, access, construction plant & materials, and cycle storage are recommended.

Southern Water: A formal application for connection to the public foul is required by Southern Water and an informative to this effect is requested. In addition it is advised that investigation of the sewer shown on the submitted plan is carried out to ascertain ownership and exact location.

Lancing Parish Council: An objection has been raised owing to concerns about overdevelopment and the possible increase in vehicles in this road, which would add to problems of parking and highway capacity.

Adur and Worthing Councils:

The EHO has no objection but requests an informative advising the applicant of the need for a demolition notice under the Building Act 1984 before commencing demolition. [The former dwelling has already been demolished and the land cleared.]

The Contaminated Land Officer recommends the full contamination condition.

The Council's Engineer has no objection in principle, commenting that the proposed site lies within flood zone 1, appears to be unaffected by surface water flooding, and has no history of flooding.

The applicant has indicated the intention to use soakaways for the disposal of surface water; the removal of the 6m x 6m ground floor extension from the AWDM/1586/15 application will allow for the construction of a soakaway therefore the only comments we wish to make at this time relates to the disposal of the surface water.

In the absence of any ground investigation details or detailed drainage details in support of the application although the applicant appears to have indicated his intention to utilize soakaways we request that should approval for this new build be granted it be conditional such that 'no development approved by this permission shall commence until full details for the disposal of surface water has been approved by the Planning Authority'

Soakage tests in accordance with BRE Digest 365 (1991) would be required to be undertaken on the proposed site to provide the data to ascertain the size of the soakaway required for the impermeable areas.

Full design calculations should be provided for the soakaway soakage test result, and the ensuing soakaway and permeable paving designs, along with the rainfall calculations with the additional rainfall quantities appropriate for climate changes, as required under planning policy."

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Saved Local Plan policies (ADC 1996): AG1, AH2
DC Standard No.2 Space Around new Dwellings and Flats
Proposed Submission Adur Local Plan (2014): 1, 2, 15, 21,
Good Practice Guide – Internal Space Standards for New Homes
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

The Development Plan comprises the saved policies of the adopted Adur Local Plan (1996) although the emerging Proposed Submission Adur Local Plan (2016) can be afforded some (albeit limited) weight. This aside, the Government has accorded the National Planning Policy Framework considerable status as a material consideration which can outweigh the Development Plan's provisions where such plan policies are out of date; or silent on the relevant matter or at variance.

The Council's own Conformity Assessment of the saved Local Plan policies indicates broad compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework, where relevant policies exist. It is recognised that the Local Plan does not demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land against Objectively Assessed Need as required in the National Planning Policy Framework and allied Practice Guidance. Although this will be addressed in due course by the emerging Local Plan, paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that in such circumstances unless the proposal is at variance with specific policies in the Framework which indicate development should be restricted, it should be approved unless the harm caused significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits when assessed against the NPPF overall.

The proposed development would make a minor contribution to meeting housing targets including OAN under the para 14/49 tests of the National Planning Policy Framework.

A number of the original detached early C20 bungalows and chalets in this road have been redeveloped at higher densities over the last 30 or more years, typically by small flat buildings. The proposed infill development follows this trend and can be supported in principle under saved policy AH2 which allows for new residential development by way of infilling or redevelopment within the built-up area, subject to its appearance, character and scale providing a pleasant place in which to live, in-keeping with and enhancing the local environment with particular attention paid to architectural form, height, materials, density and layout of buildings and hard surfaces areas; it respecting existing natural features and land form; it not having an unneighbourly effect on existing dwellings and providing adequate standards of residential amenity for new dwelling; and providing the access arrangements to the public highway and on-site parking arrangements are acceptable.

The key considerations are the living conditions of existing and future occupiers, design and the effects on the character and appearance of the area, and highway safety and parking considerations.

Visual Amenity

The former building on the site was one of the few remaining early C20 timber-framed dwellings in the road, its distinctive and characterful design a reflection of its near seaside location. It was clad in horizontal timber boarding with a shingle-tiled roof and was articulated by a variety of traditional features including a front bay window, rear catslide-roofed element, chimney, decorative ridge tiles and finials. The front garden was entirely enclosed by

hedging with no off-street parking provision. It is disappointing that this fragment of history of south Lancing and a vestige of its early character has been demolished without trace.

Following on from the recent refusal under AWDM/1586/15 the amount of development on the site has been reduced by 1 flat unit and the building footprint reduced accordingly. The overall composition is more balanced, with a slightly steeper pitched roof and symmetrical projecting front gable features 'jettied' forward of the ground-floor. The fenestration has a more traditional pattern, avoiding a 'top heavy' appearance. The external walls would consist of brickwork at ground-floor with Eternit horizontal and vertical cladding above. The roof covering would consist of slate-grey coloured roof tiles. A porch feature has been added which helps give more prominence to the front entrance (although this will only serve the first-floor flats). The ground-floor flats will have their own entrance doors on either side of the building.

There is such variety in the age, style and form of the dwellings and small flat buildings which make up the road it is difficult to identify common themes or unifying elements. However, within this overall diversity of context there is a degree of conformity in the treatment of frontages, which are typically enclosed by low walls or fences. The layout of the proposed 4 'drive-on' parking spaces will open up the frontage in a way that is generally alien to existing character (other than No.7), and will involve the removal of a significant length of the existing grass verge which is a feature of this road.

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 new 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 with particular attention (amongst other things) being paid to the architectural form, height, materials, density, scale, orientation, landscaping and layout of the development.

Following discussions with officers following the previous refusal, the overall design quality is now considered adequate (if not overly inspiring) and the resulting building will make a satisfactory contribution to a diverse street-scene. As before, it is considered the large amount of hard-surfacing on the site frontage will not be an attractive feature although an amended plan has been received showing the introduction of at least some soft planting in beds between the back edge of the parking bays and the front of the building. A form of residential redevelopment without any on-site parking provision would be acceptable purely in highway safety terms in this sustainable location, particularly as the former dwelling on the site had no on-site parking. However, as identified by the Parish Council, parking pressures are perceived locally as being a problem in this road owing to its narrow width. Whilst the impact of opening-up the entire frontage to parking is not ideal, on balance, all things considered, the harmful effect on street scene is considered to be outweighed by the merits of providing on-site provision for each flat unit. [There being no equivalent loss of existing on-street provision on this north side of the road resulting from the wide cross-over.]

Residential Amenity – Living Conditions of Future Occupiers

All the flats would have an identical GIA of 51.6 sqm which meets the minimum floor space standard of 51sqm for a 1-bedroom flat within the Council's Good Practice Guide – Internal Space Standard for New Dwellings.

The overall amount of rear garden space would exceed the Council's minimum standard of 20sqm per flat unit, laid out as a communal space with areas on either side reserved for bin storage and bike storage.

The ground-floor flats would be accessed from the sides of the building. Whilst the occupiers of the ground-floor flats would be aware of the comings and goings of other flat occupiers to and from the bin or bike store located at the rear, the effect on privacy would not be severe providing the ground-floor side windows (serving the kitchen area) are obscurely-glazed.

Residential Amenity – Effect on amenities of Existing Residents

The properties most affected are flats within Clements to the west and 7 Roberts Road to the east.

The 4 no. windows in the west side 7 Roberts Road serve kitchen areas and bathrooms in the nearest ground and first-floor flats, and are obscurely glazed. The flats in question will suffer some loss of daylight/sunlight, owing to the scale and proximity of the proposed building compared to the former chalet. However, the kitchen areas also receive borrowed light from south via the larger window serving the living/dining area, and the effect on the bathrooms cannot be afforded the same weight as for habitable accommodation. Given the proximity of the buildings to each other, the occupier of the nearest ground-floor flat at No.7 would also be aware of comings and goings along the adjacent passageway. However, the facing windows in question are obscurely-glazed and the existing boundary treatment would provide an adequate separation barrier.

There are also 4 windows in the east side of Clements serving the nearest ground and first-floor flats. It not known what rooms these windows serve, but the fact that 3 are high-level and the other small in size, suggests they are secondary in nature. There would be a minimum gap of 2m between the east flank of Clements and the side of the proposed new building. As with No.7, the windows in question will suffer some loss of daylight/sunlight compared to the pre-existing situation, and the occupier of the ground-floor flat in particular may be aware of activity along the adjacent access path which serves as the entrance to the nearest ground-floor flat, and vehicle manoeuvres on and off the nearest parking space on the frontage. The existing boundary treatment on this side is insubstantial and partially missing at the front. Taller boundary treatment would help provide a more effective separation barrier and safeguarding the occupiers of Clements from the most serious effects of overlooking.

The 2-storey element of the proposed building will project 3.3m deeper into the site than the rear wall of Clements. This will increase the sense of enclosure for the occupier of the nearest ground-floor flat but the submitted drawing shows that a 45º line taken from the nearest edge of the window in the rear elevation of Clements will not be breached.

Highway Safety and Parking

The former chalet dwelling on the site had no on-site parking provision. Four frontage parking spaces are proposed (1 per flat). The Highway Authority has not raised an objection to this level of provision, nor to the 'drive on' arrangement of the parking spaces or the width of the access required to service them.

The site is within a sustainable location, within easy walking distance of bus services along South Street and 10 minutes walking distance from the rail station. The shops and facilities of Lancing centre are also within 10 minutes walking distance. Cycle storage provision is shown within a rear store and can be secured by condition.

Recommendation

APPROVE

1. Standard time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Provide parking and access
4. Agree materials (including windows and doors)
5. Agree and implement hard and soft landscaping
6. Agree and implement cycle storage
7. Agree and implement refuse storage
8. Agree design, materials of front entrance porch
9. Agree and implement boundary treatment
10. Windows in side elevations to be obscurely glazed
11. Agree surface water drainage
12. Full contamination condition
13. Hours of construction
14. Agree and implement construction method statement

Informative

Pro-active with amendment
Addressing
Formal connection to public sewer

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 06.06.2016

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 7 June 2016