Expiry Date - 26/09/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0991/24 **Recommendation – APPROVE**

Site: **Unit 4 Durrington Bridge House Barrington Road Worthing**

Proposal: **External alterations to the existing building including removal of sheet metal roof section, installation of a new entrance door along with the addition of new windows and fan lights**

Date of site visit: 23/08/24

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: Y – Site notices displayed for the purpose of wider publicity.

Site and Surroundings

The site comprises an area of approximately 0.97 hectares, located to the north of Barrington Road and to the west of Shaftesbury Avenue within West Worthing. Access to the site is via Barrington Road. There is a large car park to the south of the building. Goring United Reform Church and Goring Little Fishes Nursery occupy the plot to the south of the building and to the east of the car park. The railway line and Durrington-on-Sea train station bound the site to the north. Beyond the railway line, to the north is The Atrium which has recently been granted prior approval for change of use from offices to 48 no. residential units. Opposite the site to the east is Worthing Leisure Centre and to the west, is the development site currently under construction for 287 dwellings, previously HM Revenues and Customs.

The site is occupied by Durrington Bridge House, a four storey building, formed around a central atrium, with additional plant floor within the eaves. The building consists of a 1990s office block faced in red brick, with courses of buff brick delineating internal storey heights with a sheet metal pitched roof and regularly spaced aluminium windows. The east and west elevations have a series of extruded arcs and plant ducts which protrude from the building. The building is currently occupied as offices for West Sussex County Council.

The site is not within a conservation area and does not contain any listed buildings. There are no protected trees on site.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for external alterations to the building including removal of the central atrium roof section, installation of a new entrance door and the addition of new windows. The application relates to the long term objectives for the site to convert the office building to residential under Schedule

2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The related application NOTICE/0016/24 is pending consideration but is independent of this decision.

The central section of metal sheet roof above the atrium would be removed leaving the surrounding roof in place. The internal atrium walls would be extended up to roof level enclosing the atrium galleries at fourth floor. The redundant pipes and exposed ducts to the east and west elevations would be removed.

The existing entrance with revolving doors and side door to the south (front) elevation would be replaced with a new double door centrally located on the entrance.

Additional windows would be added to the east and west external elevations at all levels. The new openings would line through with the existing windows below and adjacent and would be finished in dark grey aluminium to match the existing windows.

To the internal east and west elevations, facing into the atrium, fanlights would be added to all existing windows and new windows would be inserted at fourth floor level to all elevations.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1104/24 - Removal of existing cycle store and provision of replacement cycle stores and new refuse stores – Approved

NOTICE/0016/24 - Application for Prior Approval of Proposed Change of use from commercial (Use Class E) to residential (Use Class C3) to create 107 self-contained flats – Pending Consideration

Consultations:

None required

Representations:

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development and Policy Context

There is no objection in principle to the upgrading or alteration of existing buildings within the built-up area.

Worthing Local Plan Policy DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment) requires that all new development should:

> *i) be of a high architectural and design quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area. This will include consideration of proportion, form, design, context, massing, siting, layout, density, height, size, scale, materials, detailed design features and landscaping;*
>
> *ii) enhance the local environment by way of its appearance and character, with particular attention being paid to the architectural form, height, materials, density, scale, orientation, landscaping, tree canopy, impact on street scene and layout of the development;*
>
> *iii) make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area;*
>
> *v) be well built, accessible, fit for purpose, and adaptable to changing lifestyle, demography and climate;*
>
> *viii) not have an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties, particularly of residential dwellings, including unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight/sunlight, outlook…*

The key considerations are the effects of the external alterations to the building on the visual and residential amenities of the locality. It should be noted that this application is not for a change of use of the building and consideration cannot be given to this matter which is subject to a separate application for prior approval currently under consideration.

Visual Amenity

The building is visible from the surrounding roads due to its height, with the east and north (rear) elevations being the most prominent in public views. Trees and hedging obscure some views of the site.

The application would remove part of the pitched roof above the atrium but would retain the pitched roof ends to the east and west side elevations and the monopitch roofs to the front and rear. Whilst this alteration would be visible, it would not disrupt the symmetry of the building or detract from its appearance or the wider setting. Removal of the central roof section will allow light in to the inner windows facing into the atrium.

The new windows proposed on the east and west elevations align with the existing windows and would result in a balanced design that complements the form and features of the existing building and finished in materials to match the existing windows. The amount of new windows is not considered excessive in

context with the scale of the building and these openings would provide additional light and enhanced ventilation for the building.

As part of the elevational changes, the existing pipes and ducts to the east and west side elevations would be removed. These features are dated in design and do not contribute positively to the overall appearance of the building. Removal of these non-functional features is considered to update and enhance the character of the building, improving its visual appearance within the surrounding street scene.

The changes to the entrance are minimal involving a change of doors and would not have any adverse impact on the character of the building or the wider area.

The additional windows to the internal elevations facing on to the atrium are not visible from outside of the building.

The proposed alterations reflect the design and character of the existing building and would not result in harm to the visual amenities of the locality.

Residential Amenity

The closest residential dwellings to the site would be located to the west of the building, consisting of a 4 storey and 5 storey block of flats. These flats are part of the larger HM Revenues and Customs development site that is currently under construction. There is a distance of approximately 19m between the side of the existing building and the proposed 5 storey block and approximately 16m to the 4 storey block. Similar distances are proposed between blocks of flats at the adjacent development site for buildings of a similar height and therefore the application building would have a similar relationship to neighbouring buildings as the approved layout for new development. There are no extensions or increase in height proposed to the application building and therefore there would be no additional impact in terms of overshadowing or loss of light and there would be no overbearing impact as a result of these works.

It should be noted that there are already windows in the western façade of the building and the majority of new windows are to the central section of the building which is opposite a gap between the proposed blocks of flats. This would limit overlooking to some extent. Whilst it is acknowledged that the addition of new windows to the west elevation of the existing building would increase opportunities for overlooking to the proposed flats to the west, the separation distance between buildings is considered sufficient to avoid any significant impact in this respect and is similar in proximity to the adjacent development. Good screening between the sites is provided by the existing high hedging to the boundary limiting views at the lower levels.

There would be no significant adverse impact on the residential amenities of future occupants of the adjacent development, as a result of this application. No other residential properties are within close proximity of the site and would not be adversely affected by the proposals.

The addition of new energy efficient windows to the east and west facades, together with the removal of the central roof section, would enhance the internal environment of the building by increasing levels of natural light, improving thermal efficiency and creating a pleasant and healthy environment.

Conclusion

The proposed works to upgrade the exterior of the building would result in a sustainable development of high quality design that respects the prevailing character of the area and local environment and would not have any significant adverse impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties. The proposal therefore accords with the policies of the Worthing Local Plan and the NPPF.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Windows to match existing
4. Matching materials

Informative

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.

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

Case Officer: Amanda Haslett Date: 29/10/24

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 29/10/2024