Application Number: ADC/0400/08 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 111-115 South Street, Lancing BN15 8AS

Proposal: Single-storey rear extension for storage incidental to shops

The Application

Planning permission was granted in 2005 for a single-storey flat-roofed extension for storage use at the rear of these shop premises belonging to Gardner & Scardifield (L/177/05). The present application seeks to increase the size of the extension.

This three-storey building comprises shops on the ground floor with 10 flats on two storeys above (Lincoln Court). The application relates to part of the area at the rear of the building which is currently used a parking area and garage compound, reached via a narrow accessway through the south side of the building.

The proposed extension would be attached to the rear of the shops at No's 111-115 South Street and would measure 7.5m deep, 8m wide and 3.2m high, with a flat roof. This compares with the previously approved scheme for a smaller extension measuring 7.5m deep and 6.5m wide. The current proposal is 1.5m wider than the approved extension.

In July 2008, an application (ADC/0267/08) to construct a 7.5m deep by 9.3m wide extension was refused on the ground that:-

> *"01. The proposed extension, by reason of its excessive size and unsympathetic design, would form an incongruous feature that would be visually out of keeping with existing development and detrimental to the environment, thereby conflicting with the policies of the West Sussex Structure Plan (CH1, DEV1) and Adur District Local Plan (AG1)."*

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: No objection (NB. on previous application commented that potentially 4 parking spaces would be lost and the plans should be modified accordingly to ensure that some of these spaces are kept).

Lancing Parish Council: No objection providing that the extent of the extension does not prevent use of the garages for the purpose of garaging vehicles.

Third Parties: 3 letters of objection have been received from the residents of flats 2, 8 and 9 Lincoln Court (117 South Street), raising the following objections and concerns:-

- loss of car parking for residents, customers, etc and blocking of access to at least 3 garages, resulting in more on-street parking and parking difficulties for residents;
- it is a residential area, not commercial;
- increased noise and activity at rear of flats, including increase in number of delivery vehicles (including possible use of forklift truck), or woodcutting machinery;

- health and safety issues (and possibly highway issues) may arise if the applicants conduct the business in a similar way to their premises opposite;
- noise and disturbance during building work, and potential damage to flats (assurance is sought that any damage will be rectified by the applicants);
- ample buildings available on industrial estate for storage use;
- loss of rear access to flats could have health and safety/fire safety implications;
- extension will be built over a fire hydrant, water stop cock and gas main and will restrict access to waste pipes and drains for the flats;
- property values will be affected (NB. not of itself a valid planning consideration).

[NB. the resident of Flat 2 Lincoln Court requests to speak at the Committee meeting]

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, NE6, DEV1, DEV4-5
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993–2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AS1, AE5-6
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards (WSCC 2003 and ADC 2004)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS6 ' Planning for Town Centres' (ODPM 2005)
PPG13 'Transport' (ODPM 2001)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The premises are situated in an area specifically identified for shopping purposes at groundfloor level where Local Plan policy AS1 applies. This states that permission will normally be granted for shopping and food and drink purposes falling under Use Classes A1 and A3 subject to compliance with criteria including no loss of amenity to nearby residents and access and parking considerations. It also states that proposals involving a loss of existing shopping provision will not be permitted if likely to detract from the character or viability of the area.

Policies AE5 and AE6 also apply to the area where the site is located. These relate to financial and professional services located within main shopping areas and permit the provision or extension of such facilities provided, among other criteria, that there is no loss of amenity to nearby residents or loss of character or viability of the shopping area.

DEV1 states that development should not be permitted unless it is of high quality taking into account the need, amongst other things, to integrate with and, where possible, enhance adjoining land uses and minimise potential conflicts; have regard to local context including materials and building styles; create a high quality adaptable environment meeting long-term needs; give high priority to pedestrians, reduce the dominance of cars and integrate with existing transport provision.

Policy DEV4 states (amongst other things) that development should not be permitted unless the travel needs it generates are met. DEV5 states that "Development should not be permitted unless the level of parking is compatible with the need to avoid environmental or safety problems and the need is to encourage walking, cycling and the use of passenger transport where this is or can be a realistic alternative".

Visual amenity

A smaller flat-roofed extension has already been approved on this site and is still valid. The main consideration, therefore, is the impact that the proposed additional 1.5m width of the extension would have on the surroundings. The previously-refused application proposed an increase in width of the extension by 2.8m which was considered to have an unsatisfactory appearance and visual effect. The extension is 'box-like' in form and it was considered that its excessive size made it unacceptable as an addition to this block of flats and shops.

The current proposal has reduced the width of the extension by 1.3m from the previous refusal so that what is now proposed is effectively 'half way' between the originally-approved scheme and the subsequent refusal. It is not considered that this modest increase in size will have a material adverse impact on the area. Being at the rear of the building, it will not be widely visible and is considered acceptable.

Residential amenity

The extension would be below the first and second floor flats and would not affect light or outlook to any residents. The use of the extension for storage associated with the ground floor shops would also not result in any loss of amenity.

The applicants run several businesses in the area, including a timber merchants opposite where unloading lorries across the pavement with a forklift truck has been a long-standing problem. The proposed storage area would be associated with the shop use at Lincoln Court only and would therefore be unlikely to result in the same traffic problems as the timber merchants opposite.

Access and Parking

The extension would result in the loss of 3 to 4 parking spaces according to the applicant's submitted Design and Access Statement. The originally-approved scheme results in the loss of 3 spaces. While WSCC as the Highway Authority has previously recommended that the plans be modified to prevent loss of a fourth space, the additional loss of one space is not, in itself, considered to be sufficient justification to refuse the application. The site lies within a sustainable town centre location and Government advice is to relax parking provision in such areas. 17 spaces (including the garages at the rear) would remain. It is understood that the parking area is not available for use by the residents of the flats in any case. Manoeuvring and turning space would not be reduced from that previously approved. A condition is recommended to prevent external storage or display of goods at the rear of the premises.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and would help meet the need for shopping-related facilities within an area identified for such purposes, without detracting from the local environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring flats and without detraction from highway safety. It would

consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AS1) and the West Sussex Structure Plan (LOC1, NE6, DEV1, DEV4-5)

Subject to:-

1. C1Ci (Standard time limit)
2. C10Di (No outside storage or display at rear)
3. C12Ei (Materials to match existing)
4. C16Ai (Restriction of use to storage purposes ancillary to the Class A1 retail use of the ground-floor shops to which the extension is attached) (amended)

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