Adur District Council

Planning, Regeneration and Wellbeing

Stuart Henley & Partners
18 Friern Park
LONDON
N12 9DA

Our Ref: ADC/0023/10
Your Ref: 3898_02

Date: 10 March 2010

Dear Sirs,

RE: Additional storey above existing two-storey block of shops and flats to form 8 self-contained flats (4 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom), Queens Parade, North Road, Lancing, West Sussex.

In reference to the above planning application of which I am the Case Officer.

I have now had the opportunity to make a site visit to view the proposed development in the context of the surrounding area, to establish the likely effect on the neighbouring residential and commercial area. The Council has advertised the application, and has received a number of local objections from neighbours particularly from the occupiers of the existing first floor flats, in addition to comments from most of the statutory consultees notified (Environmental Health still awaited).

You are able to view these comments by visiting the Adur District Council website – http://62.189.207.185/pap_adclive/framepage.asp?appnumber=ADC/0023/10&dc2=

With regards to the merits of the application, there are some serious concerns regarding the quality of the proposed habitable accommodation, and it is my opinion that the application fails to comply with a number of the Councils policies and standards.

Residential amenity – Future occupiers
Local Plan policy AH2 relates to new residential development (by way of infilling and redevelopment) and states that new dwellings should be designed so that their appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live and are in keeping with and enhance the existing local environment with particular attention being paid to architectural form, height, materials, density, layout of buildings and hardsurfaced areas; they do not have an unneighbourly effect due to loss of privacy; daylight/sunlight; outlook or open space, incorporating adequate standards of residential amenity for the new dwellings in terms of amenity space, daylight, outlook and privacy; access and parking provision meets the adopted standards; and they accord with the Council's DC Standard No.2 'Space around New Dwellings and Flats'. Also of note is the Council's

recently produced ‘Draft Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standard for New Homes.’ (copies attached)

The proposed flats range from 32.4sqm for a one-bedroom flat to 58.9sqm for a two-bedroom flat. These are clearly substandard and would not provide accommodation that would comply with the above policies and guidance. There is no allocation of exterior outdoor space to the future occupiers, whereas the above standards requires there to be 20sqm per dwelling (see below).

Residential amenity – outside spaces
The site lies within the town centre and as such it is unlikely that private outdoor space can be made available to each dwelling. The existing communal areas which provide access to each of the existing flats has been subdivided to provide small outdoor areas, however the quality of the entrance stairwells and these communal areas is in a very poor state and it is unfortunate that the opportunity is not being taken to significantly improve these areas, with the aim of providing a better quality entrance and exit to both the existing and proposed flats.

Waste collection
The rear of the existing is very well used, with the rear service yard cluttered with extensions and additions making access for service and delivery vehicles difficult. Bin storage for the proposals has clearly not been thought out thoroughly, and an objection has been raised by the Council’s Waste services department. The existing situation does not provide adequate waste storage facilities and there are no recycling facilities. The proposed location for the bin storage would impede access to the rear of buildings and would add to the clutter within the service yard. It would not be possible to collect refuse and recycling from the proposed location. It is my opinion that the reconsideration of this element of the proposals could provide significant environmental benefits for the whole of the site, and the way in which it operates.

Parking and Access
No objection has been received from the Highways Authority, subject to the receipt of the completed s.106 agreement. However the impact of the development on on-street parking is identified as a possible issue that the Local Planning Authority may wish to consider. With regards to this aspect of the proposals, it is clear that there are no identified parking spaces within the site for either the proposed flats or for the existing, and on-street parking is at a premium, therefore it is considered that other measures to mitigate the impact of the additional/existing dwellings should be considered.

Design and character
The proposed design as viewed from the front (east) and side (south) is evidently designed to match the existing flats, however the Parish Council state a pitched roof would be more in keeping. The plans appear to have some inaccuracies with regards to the eastern elevation. In some instances the existing windows are in-filled in the lower section with white panels and have a higher cill level (probably serving bathroom and/or kitchens), whereas others are comprised of two glazed panels with a lower horizontal bar. The introduction of cedar weatherboarding will improve the appearance of the exterior of the building and is welcomed. The resultant overall mass and bulk of the scheme is considered to be acceptable given the town centre context.

In conclusion the main failing of the proposals appears to be the likely effect of the residential accommodation on the eventual occupiers. The flats sizes in most instances do not meet the minimum sizes as set out in the Councils standards and guidance as mentioned above, and thus the proposals would be contrary to policy AH2 of the Adur

District Local Plan. The lack of mitigation to offset the zero car parking provision, lack of appropriate bin/recycling provision and lack of attention to existing and future outdoor spaces and pedestrian access points are also all major concerns. Consequently I must inform you that the application is likely to be refused, and I give you this opportunity to withdraw the application to discuss whether there are any ways in which the application may be changed to get a positive Officer recommendation at a subsequent date.

Please can you mention my comments to your client and if you are minded to withdraw the application I would be grateful if you could do so within 14 days of the date of this letter. If no response has been made by this date the application will be determined on the basis of its current submission.

Yours sincerely,

Carlos Hone
Planning Officer

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