Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **AWDM/1867/22** **Recommendation – Approve**

Site: **The Old Town Hall, 142 Albion Street, Southwick**

Proposal: **Conversion of existing offices to form 6no. flats (1 x one bedroom and 5no. x two bedroom); proposed hipped roof rear extension to 2nd floor with inset balcony; flat roofed rear extension over part of existing 1st floor terrace with new glazed balustrade; cantilevered balcony to ground floor rear elevation; alterations to ground floor rear windows to form juliet balconies; rooflights to front, PV panels to rear, 10no. parking spaces and covered cycle store building on land to east. Application to vary condition 1 (approved plans) of approved AWDM/0877/20 to extend roof at rear (south) to provide a new gable and roof terrace with glazed balustrade.**

Date of site visit: 21 November 2022

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The site comprises a three storey building with accommodation within the roof fronting Brighton Road. The ground level drops away to the Shoreham Basin (Lady Bee Marina) to the south. The lower ground floor on the south side of the building does not form part of the application. The building was previously occupied by a number of businesses as offices but is now vacant following the grant of planning permission for its conversion to 6 flats (AWDM/0877/20).

It is a red brick building of distinctive design and the site lies within the Southwick Riverside Conservation Area.

As approved, a first floor flat-roofed rear extension, approximately 2.6 metres deep, is to be constructed over the existing first floor terrace, with a new glazed balustrade to the terrace to replace the existing steel balustrade. At second floor level a hip roofed extension was proposed within the roofspace, approximately 2.6 metres deep, with an inset balcony.

This application seeks to amend the design to include a full gable in place of the hip roofed rear extension at 2nd floor level. An external balcony with glazed balustrade is proposed in front of the gable.

Relevant site history

NOTICE/0011/17 – Application for permitted development for prior approval for change of use from offices Use Class B1a set out over three floor to Use Class C3, 6 residential units - Prior Approval granted

AWDM/0636/19 – Alterations and extensions to facilitate change of use from offices to flats previously approved under application reference NOTICE/0011/17. Extensions comprise first and second floor rear extensions and provision of balconies and roof terraces plus formation of additional flat to provide total of 7 flats (5 x 2 bed and 2 x 2 bed) over 3 floors - withdrawn.

AWDM/0877/20 - Conversion of existing offices to form 6no. flats (1 x one bedroom and 5no. x two bedroom); proposed hipped roof rear extension to 2nd floor with inset balcony; flat roofed rear extension over part of existing 1st floor terrace with new glazed balustrade; cantilevered balcony to ground floor rear elevation; alterations to ground floor rear windows to form juliet balconies; rooflights to front, PV panels to rear, 10no. parking spaces and covered cycle store building on land to east – approved

AWDM/1633/21 - Erection of a new three storey office building, with ground floor parking under (on Town Hall car park) - approved.

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highway Authority** has no objection as no changes are proposed to the number of dwellings or the vehicular access or parking layout previously permitted.

West Sussex Fire Service: Having viewed the plans for the planning application for the address given above, evidence will be required that all areas of all domestic properties are within 45 metres of a fire appliance in accordance with Approved Document B Volume 1 2019 Edition para 13.1 (page 97); all points inside each dwelling is to be within 45 metres of a fire appliance. This is due to the minimum length of firefighting hose connected to the appliance used to fight fires. Any areas not within the 45 metre distance will need to be mitigated by the fitting of domestic sprinklers.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health** Officer has no objections to this variation of condition 1 so long as the glazing specified in the initial permission is carried through into this new design.

The **Private Sector Housing** Officer has no objections

Design and Conservation Architect: The existing rear extensions to the old Southwick Town Hall Building are of very poor quality and detract from the character of this CA. The proposals attempt to unify and improve this part of the building, and I believe the current proposals would enhance this part of the CA. I do have some concerns regarding the form and extent of the proposed glass balustrading, but this could be conditioned if you are minded to approve the application.

The ***Engineer*** has no drainage concerns.
Flood risk- The application is within flood zone 1, and is outside of predicted future tidal flood extents for both the defended and undefended scenarios.

The site is not shown as being at risk from surface water flooding. We therefore have no objections to the proposals from a flood risk perspective. Surface water drainage- the application does not include changes to impermeable area, we therefore have no conditions to request. Any changes to parking surface should be of a fully permeable construction. Any proposed alterations to surface water drainage must be designed and constructed in accordance with building regulations, any opportunities to reduce runoff should be considered.

Southern Water: No objection subject to usual informatives

Representations

1 letter received from a resident in Springate Road stating that this is a particularly lovely building and they would like to see the exterior preserved as much as possible.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 2, 3, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 28, 34, 34, 36
'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.2 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
Sustainable Energy SPD (August 2019)
Southwick Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy (ADC 2009)
Shoreham Harbour Joint Area Action Plan 2019
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (DCLG 2015)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal will increase the existing housing stock located within the built up area and can be supported in principle, particularly as the conversion to residential use already has permission.

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

Visual amenity and impact on Conservation Area

The approved development was considered to be sympathetic to the original building and to neighbouring properties. The rear of the building is not as important architecturally as the front and has a number of later, flat-roofed additions which are not in character with the more elegant frontage.

The approved rear extensions were considered to have an acceptable impact on the building and its setting within this small Conservation Area. The change to the roof now proposed, extending the hip previously approved into a full gable, is considered to be acceptable and in the view of the Council's Conservation Officer, "attempts to unify and improve this part of the building". For this reason it is considered that the proposals would enhance this part of the Conservation Area. The extent of the balcony has been reduced from the original submission to be limited to the area in front of the gable only and is now acceptable.

All other proposals are as previously approved.

Residential amenity – for proposed dwellings

The approved flats already satisfied the requirements for habitable dwellings in accordance with the Technical Housing Standards. The proposal will increase the living room space and provide an outdoor balcony which will enhance the living environment for the proposed occupants of that flat.

Noise

The previous application was supported by a noise report which recommended that the fenestration and ventilation would need to be upgraded.

A MVHR ventilation system with summer bypass for all property in the development was also recommended. Both of the previous conditions securing these measures will be reimposed on this permission to ensure that the flats provide a satisfactory living environment for future occupiers.

Residential amenity – effect on existing dwellings

The only dwelling directly affected by this proposal is Malthouse Cottage which abuts the site to the east. The previous application was amended to take account of objections made by the occupiers of that property, including the provision of privacy screens to the nearest balconies, obscure glazing the east-facing window and raising the cill height of the rooflights.

Malthouse Cottage has a narrow patio area to the north of the property, abutting the boundary wall with the proposed car park. The occupiers have previously objected to the roof extensions as they are concerned at the potential loss of light to this area.

The second floor extension will add bulk to the roof over that previously approved. However, the second floor roof extension will not project beyond the line of the north boundary wall and the old town hall building is positioned north west of Malthouse Cottage. Any loss of light is therefore likely to be very limited as sunlight will continue to reach the rear garden of Malthouse Cottage from the south and west. The roof terrace will project in line with the garden and an obscure glazed screen is proposed to maintain privacy.

It is not considered that the roof extension and balcony will cause serious harm to the residential amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

Accessibility and parking

The car park to the east currently serves the Old Town Hall and the original plans for the conversion to flats showed the provision of 10 parking spaces to serve the 6 flats proposed (AWDM/0877/20) plus cycle storage.

Permission has since been granted to build over the car park with a an office building (AWDM/1633/21) and the approved plans for that scheme show the provision of 8 parking spaces, 6 of which are to be used by the proposed residents of the flats in the Old Town Hall with 2 allocated to the office space. 8 cycle parking spaces are also to be provided.

This arrangement was previously considered to be acceptable and the Highway Authority has not raised an objection to the current application.

Sustainable and resource efficient buildings

The applicants have previously provided a brief summary of sustainability measures which were considered to be acceptable and no changes are proposed as a result of this current amendment application.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the Construction Management Plan received 18 July 2022 under application reference AWDM/1215/22 and shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. Car parking
4. Cycle parking
5. Materials, including windows, doors, balconies, rooflights
6. No development shall commence until full details of all new glazing and the MVHR system to be installed have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following approval of these details, all works which form the scheme for protecting the proposed flats from traffic noise, as set out in the Acoustic Design Statement by Sound Solution Consultants received 18 July 2022 under application reference AWDM/1215/22 shall be completed, including the approved glazing and MVHR details, before any of the flats are occupied and retained thereafter. Following completion of the scheme, a test shall be undertaken to demonstrate that the attenuation measures proposed in the scheme are effective and protect the residential units from noise.Bin store
7. Privacy screens shall be erected in accordance with the details submitted 18 July 2022 under application reference AWDM/1215/22

prior to commencement of use of the balconies and shall thereafter be retained.

8. Windows in east elevation
9. Cill of rooflights to be 1.7m above floor level and obscure glazed

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

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Southern Water

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 26 January 2023

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 26 January 2023