Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Approve**
AWDM/1144/12

Site: **118 High Street, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex BN43 5DB**

Proposal: **Conversion of existing office and two bed maisonette to form office and 2no. 1 bed flats with ground floor rear extension**

Date of site visit: 24/10/2012

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a two storey property on the edge of the High Street opposite the new development at Ropetackle. It is currently in office use on the ground floor with a 2-bed maisonette on the ground and first floors.

The application is seeking to reduce the size of the ground floor office to about 20sqm at the front of the building and to convert the remainder of the property into 2 one-bed flats. A ground floor flat-roofed rear extension measuring, as amended, 3.8m deep, 5m wide and 2.6m high is also proposed in order to provide a level of accommodation which meets the Council's minimum floorspace standard. Part of an existing rear extension is to be demolished to enable a small enclosed terrace measuring 6sqm to be formed. This will enable natural light and an outlook to be provided for the ground floor kitchen and bedroom (which will also receive light via a raised roof lantern).

The flats would have floor areas of approximately 45sqm (first floor) and 48sqm (ground floor). There would be pedestrian access via a rear passageway running along the back of 112-118 High Street for bikes and bins.

A rear garden of 16sqm will be available for the ground floor flat.

Relevant site history

None

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The Transport Planning Officer states that the proposed nil car parking allocation would not meet the WSCC Car Parking Standards, however he does not consider that highway safety would be detrimentally affected. The Planning Authority may wish to consider the potential impacts of this development on on-street car parking.

The applicant has stated that Cycle parking will be included; this must be secure, covered and be capable of storing at least one cycle per bedroom of the proposed flats. The actual details of the cycle parking facilities should be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). To accommodate cycle parking any cycle store should have minimum dimensions of 6m x 3m.

The new flats are to be situated in a sustainable location as the site is within walking distance of public car parks and has close links with the public transport network. The proposal would also not be anticipated to generate an increase in vehicle movements with respect to the existing office use, and the peak usage times would not be expected to coincide with peak traffic levels in this area.

On this occasion there will be nothing sought for this application as it will be below threshold for contributions.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The Environmental Health Officer has no objection. The contaminated land officer recommends the full contaminated land condition.

Environment Agency: No objection.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AS1, AE5, AE6, AH2, AH5, AH9 and Appendix 11 ‘Supplementary Planning Guidance’ comprising: Development Control Standard No.4 ‘Flat Conversions’
Good Practice Guidance Note ‘Internal Space Standards for New Homes’ (2010)
South East Plan (GOSE 2009): CC1, CC6, BE1
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site is located within an area allocated as Business and Shopping in the Adur District Local Plan (Policy AS1). Policy AE5 states that improvements or extensions of existing office premises will be permitted subject to a number of criteria. These include a requirement for no loss of residential accommodation at upper floor level. Policy AH5 states that there is a presumption in favour of dwelling units suitable for small households (such as single persons, small families and the elderly). The provision of improved residential accommodation within the town centre is also considered to be acceptable and compliant with the aims of the NPPF. In principle, therefore, the proposal

to retain an office use and to increase residential accommodation is acceptable.

Visual amenity

The proposal would have little impact on the visual amenities of the area. The proposed extension would be at the rear and would not be visible in public views. It would match an extension at the neighbouring dwelling, which has also been converted into flats.

Residential amenity

The rear extension would abut an existing rear extension at No.116 to the south and the side wall of the pet shop to the north. It would not therefore have any adverse impact on amenity.

The conversion works would result in a level of accommodation which is slightly below the minimum standard as set out in the Council's Space Standards for New Homes (51sqm) although it would meet the standard set out in DC Standard No.4 for flat conversions (45sqm).

On the ground floor, the proposed extension matches that at the adjacent property (which was recently converted into flats) and enables a living/dining area to be provided which meets the Council's minimum area requirement. The ground floor bedroom will also have an improved outlook and source of light than was shown on the original plans as a result of the removal of part of an existing flat roofed extension to provide an enclosed courtyard. Its floor area also accords with the Council's standards.

At first floor, the existing 2 bedrooms are to be converted into a 1-bed flat with a bathroom and kitchen replacing one of the bedrooms. The floor area is adequate. While internal room stacking is not ideal, noise transference is dealt with under the Building Regulations.

There is potential to look down into the ground floor bedroom through the roof lantern when looking out of the bathroom window at first floor. A condition requiring the bathroom window to be obscure glazed should be imposed.

Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The proposal would change the current accommodation from an office with non-habitable residential rooms on the ground floor, to providing a self-contained flat on the ground floor with bedroom and living room. The risk is therefore considered to increase.

The applicants' Flood Risk Assessment refers to the provision of higher thresholds to front and rear doors and positioning services and electric points 800mm above floor level.

The Environment Agency has no objection.

Parking and Access

No car parking is available at the site, in common with many properties in the High Street. Cycle parking is to be provided at the rear and it is considered that in this sustainable town centre location, this is sufficient and will not harm highway safety or cause undue demand on parking space within the town.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is within the built up area and would help meet the need for additional dwelling units without detracting from the local environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH5, AH9) or the policies of the South East Plan (CC1, CC6, BE1)

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Materials to match existing
3. Obscure glaze bathroom window to first floor flat
4. Bicycle storage details
5. Refuse storage
6. Development to take place in accordance with submitted FRA
7. Contaminated land
8. Permission relates to approved plans

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.

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 18 February 2013

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 18 Feb 2013