Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Approve**
AWDM/0453/12

Site: **Grove Lodge Veterinary Group, 21 Southwick Street, Southwick, West Sussex, BN42 4AD**

Proposal: **Retrospective application for; extension of the lean-to roof over the existing outbuilding to form a cycle storage facility; addition of a lead canopy roof over new entrance at the rear supported off green oak posts; location of air conditioning units at ground floor level at the rear of the building serving the veterinary practice at ground floor; roof alterations to form adequate height for an entrance door to be formed at first floor to the 1st floor apartment. (Amendments to planning permission AWDM/0272/11)**

Date of site visit: 29 May 2012

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a Grade II listed building within the Southwick Conservation Area. The 2 storey building was most recently in use as District Council offices but was originally a house. It has a flint face with mansard roof. There is a smaller pitched roof outbuilding to the north of the main property and a single storey extension at the rear. There is a car park and a small grassed area at the rear.

Planning permission and listed building consent was granted in August 2011 for the change the use of the premises to form a veterinary surgery at ground floor with a self-contained flat within the upper floors, including converting the roof space (AWDM/0272/11 & AWDM/0273/11). Various internal and external alterations were approved including a new external staircase with privacy side screen at the rear to access the first floor flat. Internally, it was proposed to remove the raised floors, walls and ceilings that were installed during its former use as Council offices.

New rooflights were proposed on the southern 'inner' roof of the outbuilding and on the rear roofslope of the main building. Windows were to be repaired and unsympathetic UPVC windows on the ground floor at the rear were to be replaced with timber windows. UPVC windows at first floor at the rear were to be replaced with a timber door to form the entrance to the flat. The entrance to the vet surgery was to be from the north side of the building with the existing front entrance on the east side retained as a false doorway.

The car park was to be retained as it was previously laid out with the grassed area forming the garden for the flat.

During the construction of the approved works (which have now been completed), a number of amendments were carried out which required the submission of this fresh application for retrospective consent.

The changes are as follows:

1. The formation of a lean-to roof at the rear, extending and raising the roof of the existing outbuilding, to form a covered area for bicycle storage
2. Formation of a lead canopy roof over the new entrance at the rear supported by oak posts
3. The siting of air conditioning units on the rear elevation at ground level below the staircase leading to the first floor flat
4. Alterations to the rear roofslope (raising the eaves and forming a raised roofslope) to provide adequate height for the entrance door to the flat.
5. The formation of a rooflight on the north facing roofslope over the new entrance

Relevant site history

Planning permission and listed building consent was granted in August 2011 for the change the use of the premises to form a veterinary surgery at ground floor with a self-contained flat within the upper floors, including converting the roof space (AWDM/0272/11 & AWDM/0273/11).

Consultations

Adur District Council – The Environmental Health Officer has no objection

ADCAG – Support

Representations

1 letter received from the occupiers of 11 Southwick Street raising concern at the possible noise disturbance from the air conditioning units. They already suffer disturbance from the units at The Ship Inn.

Relevant Planning Policies
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AB4, AB5, AB6, AB7, AB8, AB9, AB10
South East Plan (GOSE 2009): CC1, CC6, BE1, BE6
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The application relates to amendments to an approved scheme to convert the former Council Housing Offices into a veterinary surgery with flat above. The principle of the conversion is therefore established and this application is only for alterations to the approved design. The main considerations will be the

impact on the historic character and appearance of the listed building and Conservation Area and the impact on residential amenity.

Visual amenity and impact on character and appearance of listed building

The proposed amendments to the approved design are assessed individually below:

The formation of a lean-to roof at the rear, extending and raising the roof of the existing outbuilding, to form a covered area for bicycle storage

This extension consists of a slate roof supported by oak posts which extends the existing roof over the outbuilding southwards to form a covered area for bicycle storage. The roof has been extended and raised in height by approximately 0.4m with the eaves height also increased and new slates used.

While the new angle of roof does increase its prominence when viewed from the north, it is a subsidiary element to the main building and is not considered to harm its overall character. The lean-to roof extension is at the rear and is screened from public street views by the outbuilding to the north. It is not considered to result in harm to the character or appearance of the listed building or the Conservation Area.

Formation of a lead canopy roof over the new entrance at the rear supported by oak posts

The lead canopy roof is at the rear of the building and forms the entrance feature to the proposed surgery. It is supported on oak posts and forms a simple structure which, while visible from the street, does not detract from the character and appearance of the building or its Conservation Area setting.

The siting of air conditioning units on the rear elevation at ground level below the staircase leading to the first floor flat

Two air conditioning units are proposed to be sited on the south facing wall of a rear projection on the building, underneath the approved access staircase to the first floor flat. Their location will ensure that they are not prominent features. They are shown as being independent of the building (i.e. not attached) and will not harm the fabric, character or appearance of the building.

Alterations to the rear roofslope (raising the eaves and forming a raised roofslope) to provide adequate height for the entrance door to the flat.

This is the most prominent amendment to the listed building. The applicants' agent has submitted a supporting statement which advises that during the course of the works the 1st floor structure was opened up and found to be not sufficiently stable to support the proposed apartment. The old floor timbers were removed and a new floor structure constructed which was 200mm higher in order to achieve a more comfortable floor-to-ceiling height within the ground floor veterinary practice. This resulted in a 'knock-on' need to increase

the height of the entrance door to the first floor flat. The design solution for this was to form a break in the eaves line with a raised section of sloping roof over the door, forming a slight canopy.

It is an unfortunate alteration which does break the eaves line at the rear of the building. However, on balance, it is not considered that it causes sufficient harm to the character and appearance of the building as to warrant refusal of this element. The rear of the building is less important than the flint-faced frontage and it is not as prominent from public viewpoints.

The formation of a rooflight on the north facing roofslope over the new entrance

The rooflight is a conservation area style rooflight which sits on the north facing roofslope over the new entrance. It is visible from public views but is an acceptable addition which does not harm the character and appearance of the building or Conservation Area.

Residential amenity

None of the majority of the amendments has any adverse effect on residential amenity. The air conditioning units are sited close to the boundary wall with 19 Southwick Street. A letter has been received from the occupier of No.11, which is located further south, expressing concern at the potential noise disturbance. However, the units have a decibel level of 51db and the Environmental Health Officer has no objections to the proposal. The boundary wall acts as a reasonable noise barrier to the nearest dwelling to the south and the air conditioning should not need to be operating outside of working hours.

Parking and access

The existing parking arrangements will remain, namely 8 parking spaces within the existing hardstanding at the rear of the premises. Cycle parking is shown within the extended lean-to covered area at the rear.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposal is an appropriate type of mixed use for this vacant site on the edge of the Southwick shopping area and would assist in the economic regeneration of the area. It would not detract from the residential amenities of nearby dwellings nor be detrimental to the local environment or highway safety. It would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the historic quality of the listed building. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AB4, AB7, AB8, AB9) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Subject to:-

1. Restriction of opening hours of veterinary practice to 8am-7.30pm Monday to Friday, 8.30am-5pm on Saturdays and 10am – 4pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays
2. No animals shall be kept on the premises overnight unless otherwise approved by the LPA.
3. Approved cycle parking provision to be retained
4. Approved privacy screen to be retained
5. Approved boundary treatment to be retained
6. Approved plans

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 2 July 2012

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 12 July 2012