Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0392/15 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 83 North Road Lancing West Sussex BN15 9AS

Proposal: Conversion of 3 bedroom flat into 2 no. 1 bedroom flats including alterations to external stairs/landing and rear elevation

Date of site visit: 16.04.2015

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application property comprises a self-contained first-floor flat located above a hairdresser (No.79) and charity shop (No.81) within a 2-storey flat-roofed building fronting the main shopping street in Lancing village. It occupies a corner position at the junction with Culver Road and is accessed from the rear via an external platform and steel framed stairs.

Permission is sought to sub-divide the existing 3-bedroom flat into 2 x 1-bedroom units. The conversion works would involve blocking up the existing door opening and forming 2 new door openings in the first-floor rear (west) elevation plus extending the platform/external stairs northwards by approximately 1m.

The submitted drawings show provision for cycle storage under the external stairs and refuse storage on the adjacent concrete path.

Adjoining to the west is a commercial car repair garage with cars displayed for sale on the shallow forecourt fronting Culver Road.

Relevant Planning History

Conversion of existing 3-bedroom first-floor flat into 2 no. 1-bedroom flats – refused due to lack of parking provision and overdevelopment. Allowed on appeal in 1989 (L/199/89/TP refers) – not implemented.

Consultations:

WSCC: The Highway Authority has no objection commenting:-

"This application proposes the conversion of an existing flat into 2 flats. There is no existing off-street parking, nor is any proposed. The property is situated in the centre of Lancing.

In terms of transport, the property is situated in a sustainable location. The property is within walking distance of a range of services and public transport, hence there is no reliance as such on the use of the private car. This application therefore is in compliance with the NPPF (2012) in encouraging the use of sustainable transport.

Cycle parking should be included, if not already available. This must be secure, covered and be capable of storing at least one cycle per bedroom of the converted building. The actual details of the cycle parking facilities should be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

Any approval of planning permission would be subject to the following condition:

Cycle parking
No dwelling, hereby approved, shall be occupied until covered secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with a detailed construction plan to be submitted to and approved by the planning authority. Reason – To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with the NPPF (2012)."

Southern Water has requested an informative be attached to any approval of planning permission advising the applicant that a formal application will need to be made to Southern Water for connection to the public sewer.

Lancing Parish Council has raised no objection to this application.

Adur and Worthing Councils: The EHO comments:-

"I would advise that all works of construction, including the use of plant and machinery, necessary for implementation of this consent shall be limited to the following times:- Monday to Friday 08:00 - 18:00 hours; Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 hours; Sundays and Bank Holidays no work permitted.

Although there is a potential day time noise source to the rear and the commercial unit beneath, thermal double glazing and sound insulation required by Building Regulations should be sufficient to protect future residents from noise disturbance."

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH5, AH9 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising:
Development Control Standard No.4 'Flat Conversions'
National Planning Practice Guidance
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012).

Planning Assessment

Principle

Saved policy AH9 allows for the conversion of dwelling houses into smaller self-contained units subject to there being acceptable access and car parking provision, there being no adverse impact on the amenities of the neighbouring properties and providing the type of property concerned and the standard of accommodation created would accord with the Council's adopted Standards. The conversion of small family houses is not supported.

Despite having 3-bedrooms, it is not considered the existing flat provides a good quality of family accommodation in view of its location above a busy shopping street, and backing onto a commercial garage. There is no external amenity space or parking provision available. Thus there is no objection in principle to the proposed sub-division into smaller units subject to compliance with the other criteria of saved policy AH9 being met.

Visual amenity

The only external alterations would be at the rear and would have no serious implications for visual amenity providing they are carried out in matching materials and to match the existing window design. The extension to the external stairs should be painted black to match the existing.

Residential amenity – living conditions of future occupiers

The above SPG sets out the Council's adopted space standards for flat conversions. A minimum floor area of 45sqm is required for a 1-bedroom flat. The Gross Internal Floor Area of both proposed flats (Flat 1 – 38sqm and Flat 2 – 39sqm) falls below this standard.

The Government has recently published its own nationally described internal space standards set out in NPPG. These have not been adopted by the Council but are a material consideration and stipulate a minimum requirement of 39sqm for a 1-bedroom 1-person flat. This would be met by Flat 2, whilst Flat 1 would fall slightly below the national standard.

The Council's SPG allows for bedsitting room accommodation having a minimum floor area of 30sqm. Accordingly the proposed layout could be amended to show a shared living/sleeping area which would meet the Council's standard. However, it is considered a layout which includes an entirely separate sleeping area would provide a better day-to-day living environment for the future residents. In the circumstances it is considered refusal would not be warranted solely on the grounds of sub-standard floor area. The flats would be provided with an aspect to the front (east) and rear (west) of the building with good levels of natural daylight. It is considered a satisfactory standard of accommodation would be provided.

Residential amenity – effect on neighbouring occupiers

It is not clear from the planning history whether the attached first-floor property is currently in residential use. It has self-contained access from

North Road to the south (and cannot be accessed form the external stairs serving the application property). In any event, it is not considered there would be any significant impacts on the occupiers thereof arising from the current proposals.

There are residential flats above the shops in Queensway on the opposite side of North Road, and to the north above Queens Parade. There is also a short terrace of single-storey former Almshouses to the north of Queensway. None of the above would be materially affected by the proposed development.

Highway safety and parking

There is no on-site parking provision available. However, the site is within a highly sustainable location within easy walking distance of a broad range of services and facilities within Lancing village centre and public transports links including Lancing rail station and bus services along North Road. No objection has been raised by the Highway Authority subject to the provision of secure covered cycle parking. This is referred to vaguely on the submitted plans as cycle storage space under external stairs. Further details are required to ensure that the provision is secure and can be provided without interfering with the external space used by the ground-floor shops which have rear doors onto the access path.

Recommendation APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 Year Time Limit

2. Approved Plans

3. Blocking up of the existing openings and works of making good to be completed in matching materials

4. New window to match design and appearance of existing window in rear (west) elevation

5. Agree cycle storage

6. Hours of construction

7. Provide refuse storage prior to occupation

Informatives

1. Proactive Statement – No Amendments

2. New Address

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 30.04.2015
Authorising Officer: Gary Peck Date: 30 April 2015