Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0428/16 Recommendation – Approve

Site: **Northbourne Medical Centre, Eastern Avenue Shoreham-By-Sea**

Proposal: **Change of Use from D1 Medical to A1 Funeral Directors; material changes/alterations to the existing building**

Date of site visit: 8 April 2016

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a single storey building located on the corner of eastern Avenue and Upper Shoreham Road. It was previously in use as a medical centre but was vacated in 2014/15. The application proposes a change of use of the building to funeral directors and chapel of rest.

Minor changes are proposed to the building at this stage comprising alterations to windows/doors.

The building sits to the north of a primary school and scout hut. There are residential properties to the east and west with Buckingham Park directly opposite.

Relevant site history

Various relating to medical centre

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highway** Officer does not consider that the proposal would have 'severe' impact on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (para 32), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal. Comments that, given the scale of the proposal and the existing permitted use, a TRICS assessment and Travel Plan are not required. It is not considered that there will be a material increase in traffic movements over the existing use. In addition there are no known capacity and congestion issues within the immediate vicinity of the site. From a capacity perspective we are satisfied the proposal will not have a severe residual impact.

The proposed parking is considered acceptable. The LHA are not aware that the previous use resulted in excess parking onto Eastern Avenue; it is considered unlikely that there would be an increase in on-street parking as a result of this proposal. There is sufficient space for parked vehicles to turn within the site.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health** Officer advises that there does not seem to be any external plant shown on the plan. The applicant should forward the location and details of the plant (including sound level and frequency data).

Southern Water: Formal connection to public sewerage system required

Representations

2 letters received from the occupiers of 7 Fairfield Close and 7 Downsway objecting for the following reasons:

- Loss of medical centre.
- Little provision for community care beds in Adur, which has been exacerbated by the demolition of Southlands Hospital and the increase in population.
- Inappropriate use close to residential area, school, nursery and childrens' playground

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site is not allocated for any particular use or purpose. It has been vacant since the medical centre was relocated to Thakeham House in 2014. The proposed use as funeral directors is not contrary to policy and, while an objection has been received on the grounds that it is an inappropriate use so close to a school, playground and residential area, this is not considered to be a valid planning consideration. Consequently, there is no objection to the use in principle, subject to considerations about impact on amenity and traffic in the locality.

Visual amenity

The proposal is for a change of use only and no significant external alterations are proposed. There will not therefore be any adverse impact on the visual amenities of the locality.

Residential amenity

The nearest dwellings are on the opposite side of the road in Eastern Avenue, directly opposite the site entrance. There are also dwellings in Buckingham Close to the west, over 60m from the building.

The proposed use is not anticipated to generate any more noise or activity than the previous medical centre use. The specified hours of use are 8.30am to 5.30pm 5 days a week.

Traffic and parking

The existing car park contains 21 car parking spaces and this is to remain unchanged. West Sussex Highways are satisfied that there will not be a material increase in traffic movements compared with the previous use and no highway objection has been raised.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Hours of use
3. No external plant to be installed without prior approval in writing
4. Use as funeral director with chapel of rest only and no other use
5. Permission relates to approved plans

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

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 3 May 2016

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 3 May 2016