Expiry 3/10/08

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0439/08 **Recommendation – Permit Application**

Site: **South Lancing Post Office 83 South Street Lancing West Sussex BN15 8AP**

Proposal: **Demolition of shop (former PO) and use of site to form part of existing groundfloor flat with single-storey front addition**

The Application

The site is located within the built up area of lancing, close to Lancing town centre on the edge of the area allocated for shopping and business use in the Adur District Local Plan. There are mainly residential land uses directly surrounding the site although there are other commercial ground floor premises to the north and south of South Street.

The existing premises comprises a ground floor flat with the currently vacant Post Office within a single storey flat roof front projecting extension. There is a second self contained flat at first floor level with a separate street entrance. Permission is sought to remove the existing single storey front extension which is the currently vacant Post Office and build a smaller single storey pitched roof front extension which will only project forward by 1.5 metres from the main building, (the existing extension has a maximum depth of 6 metres.) The new extension will then form part of the existing ground floor flat to enlarge the dining area.

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties: - 2 letters have been received from local residents stating that there is no objection provided that the single storey extension is in keeping with the area.

Director of Services:- The Environmental Health Officer has not objection in principle, however there is no first floor plan provided so difficult to comment on noise issues between flats however this can be covered by Building Regulations should permission be granted.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): LOC1, DEV1
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2, AS1, AH7 and Appendix II 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' Comprising: - Development Control Standard No. 3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)

PPS6 'Planning for Town Centres' (ODPM 2005)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Structure Plan policies seek to protect and where possible, enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area, requiring high standards of design, layout and construction (DEV1). Policy AH7 of the Local Plan states that extensions and alterations should be designed so as not to result in an unacceptable degree of overlooking, a loss of natural light or an overbearing effect on neighbouring dwellings. They should be of sympathetic design and materials to the original dwelling and the area in general.

Policy AS1 of the Adur District Local Plan states that development which involves the loss of existing shopping provision will not be permitted if the proposal is likely to detract from the character and vitality of the area.

Principle of the Loss of Retail Use

In this case the Post Office, i.e. commercial/retail use is contained within the front projecting extension attached to the existing two storey residential building. The Post Office closed in April 2008 and is now vacant, and due to its size and link to the residential dwelling for kitchen and toilet facilities it is not considered to be suitable to be let as a separate retail unit.

Although the site is located within the area allocated for shopping and business it is considered in this case that the loss of the retail use ~~in this case~~ is acceptable as it is unlikely that this unit would be let due to its limited size and fundamental link with the attached dwelling, which is occupied by the applicant. The site is located on the edge of the policy boundary and the surrounding land use is predominantly residential as well as the main use of the attached building. It is not considered that the loss of the retail unit will be detrimental to the character and vitality of the area. There are still a number of larger, more standard type of commercial units to the south and north of South Street and also further to the north in the main town centre, which this site does not form part of. This case is considered to be unique for the reasons set out above and should not set a precedent for further change of use or loss of commercial units within this policy boundary.

Residential Amenity

It is not considered that the proposal will have any adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the adjacent dwellings. The proposed extension will be smaller than the existing Post Office and will provide additional accommodation for the existing two bedroom flat which will remain, along with the existing car parking space. It is not considered that there will be any intensification of the residential use of the site.

There is not considered to be any adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the first floor flat, the layout of the flats will remain the same other than the front addition which provides an enlarged dining room.

Visual Amenity

The loss of the existing flat roof extension which is currently prominent in the street scene and replacement with a pitched roof much smaller extension will improve the visual appearance of the existing two storey building and the street scene.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that :-

The proposed development can take place without affecting the vitality of the shopping local area and would not detract from the existing local urban environment, and 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 relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7, AS1) and the West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (LOC1, DEV1)

1. C1Ci
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Case Officer..... Date.....2/10/08..

PB 2/10/08