Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0034/10 Recommendation - APPROVE

Site: **Crabtree Service Station, 102 Crabtree Lane Lancing BN15 9PW**

Proposal: **Continued use of southern forecourt for car sales (renewal of ADC/0009/09)**

The Application

The application is for renewal of the temporary permission granted by Committee for one year in April 2009. It relates to the south forecourt of this servicing, repair & MOT garage located on the corner of West Lane. It was formerly also a petrol filling station but car sales are now taking place on the forecourt.
The previously approved (amended) plan for which renewal is sought shows 7 car display spaces occupying most of the south forecourt (to Crabtree Lane) where the petrol pumps were formerly located, plus 3 customer spaces. On the east side, to West Lane, 5 customer car parking spaces are shown, leaving an area 13m wide for access to the service bay doors in the workshops.

A previous application for a two-storey extension on the north side of the garage to extend the garage workshops and provide 3 flats above was refused in 2006 (ADC/0207/06) on grounds of overdevelopment.

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: No objection, stating that they will separately negotiate with the applicant to put more bollards in front of the site.

Lancing Parish Council: No objection.

Third Parties: 2 letters have been received, from the residents of No.37 Crabtree Lane & No.28 Fourth Avenue, objecting on grounds that cars associated with this garage cause highway obstruction and safety risk, and that these cars could be parked on the south forecourt if it were not occupied by cars displayed for sale. Comment is made that cars being serviced by the garage are parked on the east side of West Lane which causes traffic travelling south to have to go on the wrong side of the road. Staff and customers also park on the pavement in front of the workshops and forecourt, causing obstruction to pedestrians and blocking visibility.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993–2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AE16

Revised West Sussex Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2003 and ADC 2004)
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM 2005)
PPG13 'Transport' (DLTR 2001)

Planning Assessment

Policies

The site is not identified for any particular use or development in the Local Plan. Local Plan policy AG1 states that within the built-up area development will normally be permitted, subject to other policies and to it not detracting from the existing local urban environment. AE16, relating to existing businesses in residential areas, states that alterations or improvements to improve their efficiency will be permitted provided on-site car parking and access arrangements are acceptable under policy AT12 (not 'saved') and there are no significant adverse effects on the amenity of nearby residents.

Highway safety

The adopted West Sussex Parking Standards require, for motor repair garages, a maximum of one parking space per 45sqm for staff plus 3 parking spaces per service bay (or 25sqm). The existing garage building has a floorspace of approx 170sqm, giving an existing *maximum* requirement of 10.6 car parking spaces (3.8 for staff and 6.8 for customers). For car sales establishments, the standard is a maximum of one customer parking space per 30sqm of gross car display area. The display area in this case is 75sqm, giving a *maximum* requirement for an additional 2.5 customer car parking spaces. This increases the overall *maximum* requirement to 13 parking spaces, whereas the submitted plan shows 8 spaces.

Whilst PPG13 aims to limit the amount of car parking provision to discourage car use, development should not be permitted if it results in significant highway safety problems. Therefore, it is a case of achieving an appropriate balance. It is evident that space is at a premium at these garage premises, with complaints, more at the time of the previous application, about on-street parking and obstruction of the footway caused by cars associated with the use of the premises. The use of the south forecourt entirely for car sales, as was previously taking place and shown on the previous application as originally submitted, left only the eastern forecourt for parking and much of that has to be kept clear for access to the service bays in the workshops.

However, whilst it is desirable to avoid on-street congestion, for space to be kept available within the curtilage of the premises for the parking of the cars of customers (both awaiting servicing and collection) and staff, in the instance of this particular case there is another issue to be considered. This is the location of the site on a road junction. As previously identified by WSCC, the use of the south forecourt for customer parking (instead of car sales) would be likely to result in more traffic movements on and off this area, with cars reversing onto the road on the junction or close to it. Consequently, the

restriction to 7 car display spaces with 8 customer spaces was negotiated as a compromise.

However, at the time of inspecting the site on 23 March 2010, there were 8 cars for sale displayed on the site plus one on the highway verge facing Crabtree Lane. Whilst this is not considered to be a sufficient reason to refuse the present application, a warning letter should be sent stating that a Breach of Condition Notice will be issued if the breach continues to take place.

Residential and visual amenity

Apart from the recreation ground obliquely opposite, the immediate vicinity is entirely residential in character. The display of cars for sale creates a more overtly commercial appearance and causes a degree of detriment to the streetscene that is undesirable within residential surroundings. Nevertheless, the garage is a long-established feature of the locality and it is not considered that the display of cars for sale causes unacceptable harm to the visual amenities of the locality. Similarly, in terms of noise and activity associated with the car sales, there is no significant impact.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

2PPii (amended) The site is located within the built-up area and the car sales assist the continued viability of a business providing local employment. Subject to compliance with the conditions, the display of cars for sale does not result in significant detriment to highway safety or the amenities of neighbouring properties and the use does not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AE16).

Subject to:-

1. There shall at no time be more than 7 cars for sale at the premises and they shall be confined to the spaces on the southern forecourt as shown denoted by a 'D' on the Block plan Drg.No.003/jw/Rev a.
   R. In the interests of highway safety and amenity having regard to policies AG1 and AB16 of the Adur District Local Plan.
2. The 8 customer parking spaces denoted by a 'C' on the Block plan Drg.No.003/jw/Rev a shall be kept available at all times solely for customer parking purposes. R. as above

Case Officer [redacted] Date 23/3/10

Planning Committee Chai[redacted]Date 29/03/10