EXPIRES 08/07/10

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0023/10 Recommendation - Refuse

Site: **Queens Parade, North Road, Lancing.**

Proposal: **Additional storey above existing two-storey block of shops and flats to form 8 self-contained flats (4 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom) (2-32 Queens Parade).**

The Application

The application site is located on the west side of North Road, to the north of the junction with Culver Road, within the main designated shopping and business area of Lancing town centre. The site is a 0.37 hectare plot comprised of a 1960's parade of shops with flats above. The shops are a combination of single and double fronted units which face onto North Road (10 units) and Culver Road (2 units). To the north is the Co-operative supermarket fronting North Road, which occupies the northern third of the site. Inset to the south is the British Legion Club a two-storey pitched roof building (not part of the site). Above the parade of smaller shops, set back behind a projecting canopy is the first floor of the parade which is comprised of 11 self-contained flats.

The building is comprised of the variety of shops at ground floor level below the canopy which shelters pedestrians. Above the parade is the flat-roofed first floor, which is comprised of light coloured brick work, fascia cladding, and tile hung panels with fenestration to the east and south serving the 11 flats. Some of the existing windows do not match in their frame design or opening style, however the opening sizes are the same, and the spacing between them is regular. The main section of the parade with flats above is 7m in height. Above the Co-operative food store is another flat-roofed storey, built in dark brown brick work, it serves the final two existing flats and is 10.6m in height.

Permission is sought for the erection of an additional storey above the existing 7m high section of the parade. It would form 8 further self-contained flats (4 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom). The additional floor would result in the parade being 10m in height for the 65m which fronts North Road, and for the most eastern 14.2m of Culver Road. It would abut directly to the side of the higher section above the Co-operative food store.

The flats would be accessed via an existing secure entrance lobby and stairwell, located on Culver Road, which would be extended up a further floor. A pedestrian footpath located between the west of the parade and the east of the British Legion allows for access to the bin storage area, the rear of the shops, and serves as another entrance to the flats above, via a staircase within the rear service yard. The flats all have their main front doors opening

onto the flat roofed areas at the rear of the shops, which also act as a walkway, and have in places been adopted by some for use as small amenity areas.

To the west of the British Legion is the main vehicular access to the rear service yard, which provides access for delivery vehicles, refuse collection, and to the rear of the shops. It is mainly used by the co-operative food supermarket which has a large loading bay in the centre. There are ten garages located in two rows of five located on the west and south side of the yard, it is not known who has rights over these garages however they are within the ownership of the applicant.

The surrounding area is made up of the main commercial shopping centre of Lancing along North Road, but in side streets the area is mainly residential in character, thus there are a number of different scale buildings within the area. Monks Court to the north, and the Adur Local Area Office are both flat roofed three-storey buildings, whereas North Farm Court and Lancing Tabernacle both have pitched roofs (east and north respectively). The residential areas are characterised by a more domestic scale of architecture with semidetached houses and bungalows being most prevalent.

The application has been submitted with a brief design and access statement and draft s.106 agreement.

The design and access statement says that: *'The most visible part of the external work is intended to be sympathetic to, and in keeping with both the subject and neighbouring properties, which would have the appearance of being part of the original build. Although there is no off street parking available, there are various bus routes, together with the mainline railway station. The high street shops are within walking distance, so reducing the need for car use. On street parking is already controlled by the Council, affording some degree of control over car use/ownership. The scheme allows for the property to be extended in a fashion that will maximise the space available without increasing the buildings footprint'.*

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: In highways terms there would be no objection. The proposed dwellings will have a nil car parking provision. It is noted that no parking is provided for the existing retail and residential units.

Car parking in the immediate vicinity does appear to be limited, and there is a public car park in close vicinity with season tickets available at cost and it is reasonable to assume that this may be used by residents. There is no evidence to suggest that the lack of parking associated with this proposal would result in any detriment to highway safety, consequently an objection on the grounds of a nil parking provision would be difficult to justify. The Planning Authority may wish to consider the implications of this proposal upon on-street parking.

The site is located in a sustainable location, and does offer the realistic opportunity to travel on foot, cycle or via passenger transport. It would be beneficial if cycle parking provision could be provided within the site, although the constraints of the site may mean that this is not possible. A condition is recommended for cycle parking, which should be applied if the Planning Authority consider such a condition reasonable.

A s.106 contribution of £4,000 would be required to mitigate the impacts of the subject proposal in terms of demand on Highways and Sustainable Transport that would arise in relation to the proposed development.

Adur District Council: The Environmental Health Officer states that the arrangement of sleeping areas next to living areas within the middle three flats on the second floor could lead to disturbance from conflicting uses. The rooms should be set out so that rooms of similar use are located next to each other. Similarly it is noted that the proposed plans make reference to 'assumed typical layout' on the existing floor and that it is important that so far as is possible the flats below should be sympathetically layout out. Concerns are also raised that the proposed use of the communal walkway could lead to disturbance to the flats below through noise transference.

The Waste Strategy Manager states that currently the domestic waste arrangements are very poor (one 1100 litre bin), with space being at a premium and additional bins will not be easily accommodated. We would not be in favour of exacerbating the historical access problems, and can therefore not support the application without a serious rethink of both the current and future collection arrangements.

Lancing Parish Council: Although the increase in housing units is welcomed and the development would improve the area there are concerns over the parking and waste collection issues. The Parish Council Committee also suggested that a pitched roof would be more in keeping with the streetscene.

[NB: Cllr Collard requested to represent the Parish Council at any future Planning Committee meeting that this application might go to]

Third parties: There have been 10 letters of objection received from No's 3, 7, 9, 19, 21, & 23 Queens Parade, No's 9 & 10 Culver Road, and from No.68 North Road. The owners of the shops at 26 Queens Parade (Jago's Hair Design) and 14 Queens Parade (Mind Matters) have also objected to the proposals. Planning consultants Roger Tym and Partners have commented on behalf of the Co-operative Group.

The main points of objection from the nearby residents are:

- Unsuitable as it would be the highest building in the area
- Out of keeping
- Insufficient parking in surrounding streets for the additional properties
- Further traffic in Culver Road

- Loss of light from the walkway which would affect the ambience of the of the properties
- Little room to provide extra rubbish facilities which would cause obstructions
- Existing bins not big enough for the existing flats, bags and rubbish left next to the bins, causing rat problems. Not very nice for visitors
- Landlord currently carries out minimum of repairs and provides no recycling facilities
- Making young families homeless

The occupier of Jago's Hair Design (No.26) strongly protests against the proposals, stating that the parade was not built to have this amount of extra weight imposed upon it, and questions whether the appropriate surveys have been carried out to ensure the footings can stand the extra weight. Concerns are raised regarding the storage of building materials, loading and unloading, and parking of builders vehicles, and the vehicles of future occupiers.

The occupier of No.14 Queens Parade states that the shops already have problems with water coming through the ceilings and from noise above, parking and access to the rear of the shops is already congested making deliveries or collection from the rear very difficult. A problem with refuse at the rear would increase health and safety concerns.

Planning consultants working on behalf of the Co-operative Group have commented that they have no objection in principle to the proposals, but they are keen that deliveries to the store are not compromised, which may have consequences for highway safety, both during construction of the units and following their occupation. They feel that if permission is granted that a construction method statement should be submitted for approval prior to the development starting covering parking of vehicles and that the access to the delivery yard remains clear; and that the rear yard should be re painted with parking spaces and loading pays with new clear signage.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

The South East Plan 2006-2026 (GOSE 2009): SCT1, SCT5, SP3, CC6, H1-2. H5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AS1, AH2, AH5 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising:
Development Control Standard No. 2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats', and
Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards (ADC2010)
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards and Transport Contribution Methodology (WSCC 2003 and ADC 2004)
PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPS3 'Housing' (DCLG 2006)
PPG13 'Transport' (DTLR 2001)

Planning Assessment

Policies

In order to meet the housing requirements of the South East Plan and Local Plan, a significant proportion of housing development by way of 'unidentified' small sites are necessary.

There is no objection in principle to development within the Town Centre shopping areas of the District provided that: there is no loss of residential accommodation at upper floor level; no loss of amenity to nearby residents; and any development is of a scale and design, including construction materials, appropriate to the locality (AS1).

The South East Plan sets out the long term spatial planning framework for the region with the aim of achieving more sustainable development, protecting the environment and combating climate change. Policy SP3 aims to concentrate development within urban areas, seeking at least 60% of all new development in the Region on previously developed land, ensuring all new developments are well designed and consistent with the principles of urban renaissance and sustainable development. Policy CC6 requires that development respects, and where appropriate enhances, the character and distinctiveness of settlements, uses innovative design processes to create a high quality built environment which promotes a sense of place, and will include consideration of accessibility, social inclusion, the need for environmentally sensitive development and crime reduction.

Policy STC1 gives priority to pro-actively pursuing sustainable economic growth and regeneration of the Sussex Coast whilst also protecting and enhancing its high environmental quality, its cultural and historic assets and promoting excellence in design of new developments in recognition of their importance to economic success and quality of life. SCT5 & H1 set housing targets are to be met by focusing development in existing towns, by optimising the use of previously developed land. H5 aims to raise the quality, adaptability and sustainability of new housing and at higher densities (overall regional target of 40 dwellings per hectare). T4 states that Local Development documents should apply guidance as set out in PPS3, reflecting local circumstances, and ensure the provision of sufficient secure cycle parking for new flats and houses which lack garages.

Local Plan policy AH2 relates to new residential development (by way of infilling and redevelopment) and states that new dwellings should be designed so that their appearance, character and scale create a pleasant place in which to live and are in keeping with and enhance the existing local environment with particular attention being paid to architectural form, height, materials, density, layout of buildings and hard surfaced areas, and they accord with the Council's DC Standard No.2 ' Space around new Dwellings and Flat'. Also relevant is the Council's recently approved 'Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards for New Homes.' Policy AH5 requires the presumption in favour of the supply of dwelling units for small households,

having regard to the desirability of a mix of dwelling types within the development and surrounding locality.

PPS1 states that: "Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."

Government policy guidance PPS3 encourages best use of urban land for housing at higher densities (minimum 30 dwellings per hectare) and without rigid application of parking and amenity space standards. However it also seeks to improve the quality and attractiveness of residential areas and urges imaginative designs and layouts which make more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the environment.

Density, character and appearance
The proposed dwellings themselves would greatly exceed the Regional and National guidance in terms of proposed density. The 8 flats themselves would have a density of 134 dph not accounting for any communal accessways etc. The existing 11 flats on the first floor include a 6.8m wide pedestrian accessway that has in place been adopted for outside amenity areas, and clothes drying areas for each of the individual flats, thus making the density as existing considerably lower than proposed at 71dph. The combined resultant density of the dwellings would be 122 dph.

As described above the main shopping area of North Road is comprised of a varied character of building type in terms of appearance, age and scale. Their being the three-storey flat-roofed Council offices directly to the north, with Lancing Tabernacle adjacent to that The main shopping area extends as far as the Co-operative Food store, with the building type then changing use and type of activity further northwards (Council office, church and police station). Directly to the east of the site are residential properties, the commercial activity having stopped further to the south on the eastern side of the road. Directly to the east is North Farm Court a three storey block of flats with pitched roof, then to the south of this is a terrace of bungalows (No's 62 – 68 North Farm Cottages).

Given due consideration to the mixed character of the surrounding urban area and the existing building, it is considered that the addition of a second floor with a flat-roof would not be particularly out of keeping with the built form of the town centre. The footprint of the building would not be increased, and as a result the visual impact from ground level would not be particularly harmful given the commercial context and activity of the town centre. The height of the main section of building would be increased to 10m, which would still be less than the highest point of the building above the Co-operative Food store (10.6m), and less than North Farm Court to the East (three-storey with pitched roof).

The proposed design of the east facing elevation would be in general an improvement to the existing appearance, with the addition of a more sustainable timber clad frontage replacing much of the tile hanging and brick

panelling. The quantity of windows as proposed would ensure that the east elevation of the building is well articulated and visually interesting. The Southern elevation which fronts onto Culver Road, however would be quite utilitarian being just made up of a block of yellow brick work, which would be in distinct contrast to the majority of the North Road elevation. Currently the south-east corner is very prominent in views from the south, and the south elevation is considered to be bland and uninteresting, however it relates well in terms of its height and scale to the British Legion to the west. The addition of a matching second floor would add to the visible mass and bulk of the SE corner and southern elevation, and it is not considered that the proposals address the prominence of the corner adequately. It is therefore considered that, on balance, the bland featureless design would result in an overdominant and bulky elevation that would detract from the appearance of the building and surrounding area particularly the junction between North Road and Culver Road.

Residential amenity – proposed occupiers

The proposals would result in the formation of a further 8 self-contained units of one and two bedrooms sizes. The above Development Control Standard does not give guidance on flat sizes or on individual room sizes but only states that an amenity area of 20sqm should be provided for each flat. The recently approved 'Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards for New Homes' sets relevant standards with regards to internal amenity, and states that one-bedroom flats should be 51sqm with 22sqm of living/cooking/eating area and a 12sqm bedroom, whereas two-bedroom flats should be 66sqm with 24sqm of living/cooking/sleeping area, and 19sqm of bedroom space (12sqm double and 7sqm single). In addition it states that rooms should not be narrower than 3.3m, and that 2.5m / 3.5m of storage space respectively should be provided within or adjacent to the flat to provided space for buggies and children's scooters etc.

The living accommodation proposed is substandard in comparison to the above Good Practice Guidance, with the one bedroom flats ranging from 37.8sqm - 51sqm (one case only), and the two-bedroom flats being 54sqm – 58sqm. In many cases room sizes are narrower than the 3.3m minimum with bedroom sizes also substandard in a number of cases. No additional storage space for buggies etc. have been provided in any case.

With regards to town centre residential development over existing shops, it is usual for their to be limited outdoor space or forms of amenity. In this instance the site is large with large quantities of flat roofs to the rear of the building. Currently a number of the existing first-floor flats have adopted areas of the communal space for their own use, for sitting out or drying clothes etc. The proposals do not offer any form of use of these areas or their own outdoor space.

The plans show only very limited detail in terms of the existing layout of the first floor flats, and whilst the assumed typical layout suggest stacking of rooms between the existing and proposed flats will not be an issue this matter

has not been confirmed, even after it had been raised as a concern. The Environmental health officer also raises concerns that the walkway to the proposed flats would result in disturbance to the existing flats through comings and goings due to the walkway being directly over the existing westernmost part of the roof.

In consideration of the effect of the proposals on the future occupants it is felt that the resultant substandard sized flats would not create a pleasant place in which to live and would be out of keeping with and detrimental to the existing local environment.

Residential amenity – surrounding dwellings
The existing occupiers have very limited facilities outside of their own front doors. The communal walkways and flat roofed areas behind the shops are very poor in terms of their appearance, or in the way in which they relate to the individual properties as an outside amenity or entrance way. The secure lobby entrance-way on Culver Road, is poorly kept, and unclean. The service yard which provides bin storage for the individual shops and residents is dirty and poorly kept with their being no provision for cycle storage or identifiable order to whose bin is whose.

The Waste Strategy Manager clearly has concerns with regards to how the site currently operates and feels that the proposed solution of additional individual wheelie bins located to the rear or the main block would not be satisfactory. The addition of 8 further dwelling units would lead to additional pressure being felt by the rear service yard in terms of limited bin storage space, and it is considered without a designated area for adequate bin storage (and some form of cycle storage) the proposals would result in a significant detrimental effect on the appearance of the rear of the buildings and the amenity of the existing tenants.

It is considered that a planning condition could be used to ensure the retention of an appropriate area for bin, and secure and covered cycle (see below) storage, and the lack of such facilities would not justifiably constitute reasons for refusal in this case.

The existing flats have their main outlook towards the east and west, with two flats having southern outlook. Given the footprint of the proposed additional floor is no larger than existing it is not considered that there would be a significant loss of light to the rooms of the existing flats.

Access and parking
The WSCC Parking Standards are maximum standards, which is an approach based on the advice within PPG13 and allows a developer to provide as much car parking as they wish providing the maximum standard is not exceeded and providing that a low standard does not result in any specific highway safety concerns.

The proposals provide a zero parking allocation for the proposed 8 new flats. This is not above the existing WSCC maximum standards, however it is likely

that on highway safety would not suffer. Currently Culver Road, North Road, and the majority of the surrounding roads have yellow lines preventing weekday parking. There is a car park close by to the site in North Farm Road, and lay-by's in North Road and Culver Road provide on-street parking for 13 cars (1 hour maximum stay) which would generally be for shoppers using the town centre rather than for local residents. The car park can be used for 24hr parking (£2.50 per day) an it could provide sufficient parking for the additional flats in a conveniently nearby location.

The site is well located in terms of facilities and public transport, with buses stopping in North Road close by and the mainline railway station being only a very short walk to the south. No provision for cycle storage is proposed although the service yard is large enough to accommodate such a facility. It is unclear whether the applicant would be willing to provide such a facility, however it is considered that such a facility could be subject to the requirements of a planning condition if permission were to be granted.

Recommendation

Refuse for the reason that:

1. The proposal would constitute an over intensive use of the site, resulting in an unsatisfactory standard of accommodation and a lack of amenity space for future residents to the detriment of the environment of the locality, contrary to the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2).

2. The proposed treatment of the extension at the corner of North Road and Culver Road, by reason of its design, use of external materials and prominence in the street scene, would detract from the visual amenities of the locality, contrary to the policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2).

PB 7/4

Case Officer: [redacted]
Date: 07/04/10