Exp 23/1

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0459/06 **Recommendation – Temporary permission**

Site: **Former Lancing Manor Filling Station, Old Shoreham Road Lancing**

Proposal: **Change of use of former filling station to storage of up to 65 cars and light commercial vehicles (retrospective)**

The Application

This is a revised application following the refusal of L/44/06 (which included the display of vehicles for sale) on grounds of detriment to highway safety and the environment.

PDH have used the site for about a year or so to store new cars bought in bulk from the manufacturer because their sales sites do not have sufficient space. The plan shows the 65 cars occupying the whole of the hardsurfaced area of the site, including blocking the access and exit. It is stated that the cars are brought here individually not on car transporters.

The site has unimplemented permission for a car showroom with ancillary MOT/preparation bay) and external display area (L/114/05), originally allowed on appeal (L/22/00).

Consultations and Representations

Highways Agency: No objection as long as the site is used for storage and not sales.

Environment Agency: No objection subject to a condition requiring surface water drainage works, to prevent pollution.

Director of Services: The EHO has no objection.

Lancing Parish Council: No objection to storage only, excluding display and sale.

Third Parties: A letter from a resident on the opposite side of the A27 objects to a formerly green oasis being crammed with scruffy cars; there is an impact on highway safety; noise and disturbance is unnecessary with cars being moved back and forth to Findon; trees are being removed; and the character and appearance of the area is being changed from one that benefits the environment to one that wastes precious resources..

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (WSCC 2005): LOC1, NE5, CH1, ERA1, DEV1, DEV4-5
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996): AG1, AT12
Revised West Sussex Parking Standards
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPG4 "Industrial and Comercial Development and Small Firms" (DoE 1992)
PPG13 "Transport" (DTLR 2001)

Planning Assessment

The site lies within the built-up area but is not identified for any particular use or development. As stated above, permission already exists for the redevelopment of this former PFS site with a car showroom building and external display area. The PFS opposite is now used for car sales, with caravan sales to the rear.
Local Plan policy AG1 states that development within the built-up area boundary will normally be permitted subject to the other policies and it not detracting from the existing local environment. Structure Plan policy DEV1 requires high quality development taking into account the need to integrate with adjoining land uses and minimise potential conflicts between land uses and activities. AT12 and DEV4-5 require safe and convenient access and adequate parking provision.

This site is located on the edge of the countryside and, because of the very small scale of the previous PFS with only a small kiosk and no canopy, had a relatively semi-rural appearance. However, this did not prevent the Inspector in 2000 from allowing a substantial car showroom/preparation bay with external display. He observed that it was separated from the AONB by a substantial group of trees, from the dwellings opposite by the very wide A27 and would not impact on the low density character of the area.

The present proposal differs from the car showroom proposal in that almost the whole hardsurfaced area is taken up by cars, facing the road (NB. not in accord with the submitted layout plan which shows them parallel to the road). However, they no longer have any price stickers and the appearance is not overtly commercial. Moreover, the appearance is arguably no worse than when the site was derelict with unsightly bunding and with parking of older vehicles (with price stickers) in the accessways by other persons. Also, the existing car sales site on the south side has already affected the character of the area.

With regard to highways concerns, the Highways Agency do not object as long as sales do not take place. It is important that price stickers are not put on the cars or other methods employed to encourage people to stop and look as no parking facility is provided and slowing and/or stopping traffic would be detrimental to highway safety. The layout as existing, with cars facing the road, probably presents a better appearance than the layout shown on the plan, although it might cause more people to look at the cars.

With regard to the comments from the resident opposite, it is not considered that these are justified. Some trees suffering dutch elm disease have been removed as necessary; there has been no use of the grassed area; the cars are not scruffy (although they are pre-preparation) or crammed on the site; and the noise associated with movements on and off the site is minimal compared to that from the heavy A27 traffic flow.

On balance, it is concluded that, with the amendment of the application to storage only, it is better to make use of the site than for it to be unused and derelict. However, any permission needs to be temporary as there is a significant possibility of it becoming detrimental to amenity and causing detraction from highway safety.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

Although the use has the potential to cause detriment to highway safety and to the local environment and does not fully accord with policies AG1 and AT12 of the Adur District Local Plan and DEV1 and DEV4-5 of the West Sussex Structure Plan, it is considered appropriate to grant a temporary permission having regard to the desirability of making use of the site but also thereby retaining planning control.

Subject to:-

1. C1Dii (Temp) .....ending on 31 January 2010.
   R. 2 + 4 .....granted and to pay regard to policies AG1 and AT12 of the ADLP and DEV1 and DEV4-5 of the WSSP.
2. This permission relates solely to the use of the site for storing cars and light vans and no price stickers or other advertisements shall be placed on any of the vehicles or on any part of the site.
   R. In the interests of highway safety and visual amenity, having regard to policies (as 1 above)
3. The number of cars and light vehicles stored on the site shall at no time exceed a total of 65.
   R. As 3 above

Case Officer.....[redacted]..... Date...16/1/07.....

Head of Planning & Communi[redacted]... Date..18...1...07...

Chairman of Committee..[redacted] Date...18/01/07...