Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0296/24 Recommendation: Approve

Site: 19 Farncombe Road, Worthing

Proposal: A two storey rear extension with first floor terrace to existing Office (Use Class E) and provision of front boundary treatment

Date of site visit: 12.03.2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N Site notice posted 12.03.2024

Site and Surroundings

The site relates to a detached two storey Victorian villa located on the west side of Farncombe Road, north of its junction with Church Walk which is on the opposite side of the street. The building is currently vacant but was previously used as offices. The site is within a Protected Key Employment area as a protected office location. The site has an in and out driveway which can accommodate 4 cars off street. The site is within a controlled parking zone which restricts parking between 10-11am and 2-3pm to residents only.

There is a protected tree at the frontage, in the south east corner of the site, where TPO No.5 of 2006 applies. The site is within the Farncombe Road Conservation Area and is a local interest building.

To the north of the site is the five storey mansard roofed 1960's office building. To the south is a semi-detached villa, extended into the roof and converted into 3 flats.

Proposal

Permission is sought for an extension to the rear of the building as extended office accommodation. The extension would be part two storey/part single storey and would measure 8 metres in depth at ground floor level and 5 metres deep at first floor with a roof terrace on the flat roof of the single storey element.

Relevant Planning History:

NOTICE/0006/23 - Application for Prior Approval of Proposed Change of Use of an office (Use Class E) to form a 4no.bedroom single dwelling
STATUS: WDN 23rd June 2023.

AWDM/1295/19 - Approval of Details Reserved by Conditions: 4 - Details of doors and windows; 7 - Details of secure cycle facilities; 8 - Details of surface water drainage, of Application no. AWDM/0365/17.

STATUS: APP 22nd October 2019.

AWDM/0005/18 - Application for a non-material amendment to previously approved AWDM/0365/17. Amendments: Removal of first floor window on north elevation, new window at first floor level on west elevation and alteration of ground floor west elevation window and new conservation rooflight to rear elevation.
STATUS: APP 25th January 2018.

AWDM/0365/17 - Part two storey part single storey rear extension and conversion of office building to form 4 no. two bedroom flats with rear first floor balcony
STATUS: APP 16th June 2017.

AWDM/0209/13 - Re-surfacing and re-modelling layout of existing forecourt car parking area, including the formation of a second vehicular access and crossover onto Farncombe Road (to allow ingress and egress by vehicles) and ancillary works; and installation of replacement painted timber front door and re-modelling of front entrance steps
STATUS: APP 30th April 2013.

90/0826 – Application for Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of existing north (side) and west (rear) extension. Approved 6.11.90

90/0820 – Alterations and extension to existing building. Granted 6.11.90

86/0809 – Formation of additional vehicular access onto a classified road and erection of new gate pier. Granted 4.11.86

85/1166 – Change of use from house to offices. Granted 4.2.86

Consultations:

The Council's **Drainage Consultant** has made that following comments:

Following a review of the submitted information, we have noted there is insufficient information provided. We would recommend requesting outline details of the proposed drainage, including masterplan drawings to show the location of all SuDS and demonstrate that the volume of storage can be achieved in the layout. The drainage details should demonstrate the proposed discharge rates from the site and ensure that the proposed development does not increase flood risk to the site or elsewhere.

Reason
To prevent flooding in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 165-175 by ensuring the satisfactory management of local flood risk, surface water flow paths, storage, and disposal of surface water from the site in a range of rainfall events and ensuring the SuDS proposed operates as designed for the lifetime of the development.

Further information has been provided by the applicant identifying the location of a soakaway and requesting that precise details be agreed by condition. The Council's

Drainage Consultant has reviewed the updated information and recommends approval of the application with the following conditions attached:

Condition 1:
Construction shall not begin until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The surface water drainage scheme must prioritise the use of source control Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in consideration of the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for SuDS and demonstrate no increase in flood risk as a result of the Proposed Development with sufficient supporting evidence provided to support its viability including supporting calculations for the 100% AEP (1 in 1 year), 3.33% AEP (1 in 30 year), 3.33% AEP (1 in 30 year) plus climate change, the 1% AEP (1 in 100 year) and the 1% AEP (1 in 100) plus climate change critical storms. Winter groundwater monitoring and winter infiltration testing to BRE DG365, or similar approved, will be required to support the design of any infiltration drainage. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of Adur and Worthing Council.

Condition 2: The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include:

I. a timetable for its implementation.
II. details of SuDS feature and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect including a drawing showing where they are located.
III. a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include details of design life and the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. This will include the name and contact details of any appointed management company.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed for each new dwelling and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of Adur and Worthing Council.

The Worthing Society has commented as follows:

Thank you for requesting our comments in respect of the aforementioned Planning Application. The plans relate to an elegant, detached Victorian villa located within the Farncombe Road Conservation Area (CA). This building is also included on the

Council's Local Interest List and has significant group value with neighbouring villas in the CA.

I have now had the opportunity to discuss the proposal with our Heritage Team and we have the following comments. We consider the design of the proposed extension is unsympathetic to the host building which is Victorian in character. In our view the materials, size and style of the proposed windows to be out of character with the conservation area and the proximate heritage villas.

In addition, we have noted the concerns raised by a near resident regarding the inclusion of the roof terrace. This could result in noise adversely affecting the amenity of near neighbours, and would set an unwelcome precedent. The Farncombe Road CA is located in an unusual urban setting, relatively compact with near residents in close proximity. The present application seems overly ambitious for the available site area.

The **Highway Authority** raises no objection and has made the following comments:

Summary and Context
This application seeks the erection of a two-storey rear extension to existing office (Use Class E) and provision of front boundary treatment. The site is located on Farncombe Road, a C-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph. Following an inspection of the submitted application documents, WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) raises no highway safety concerns for this application.

WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) previously provided consultation advice for this site for application NOTICE/0006/23, raising no highway safety concerns. This application was withdrawn.
Content

No alterations are proposed to the existing vehicular access arrangement. The proposed development would not be anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of use of the existing points of access.

Off-street parking provision for four cars is to be retained. Under WSCC Parking Standards, the LHA would expect parking for 11 cars to be provided for an office development of this size. As such, overspill parking may have to be accommodated on-street or within nearby paid-for provision.

There are parking restrictions in place on the nearby roads that prohibit parking in places that would be detrimental to highway safety. The LHA would not anticipate that the shortfall in parking would lead to a highway safety concern or parking capacity issue in this location, although the LPA may wish to consider the potential amenity impact on on-street parking. The LHA appreciates that the site is situated in a sustainable, well-connected location within walking/cycle distance of public transport connections.

The proposals do include six new cycle parking spaces, which exceed WSCC Parking Standards for an office development of this size. The inclusion of secure cycle parking provision will help promote the use of sustainable transport methods.

Conclusion
The LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.
If the LPA are minded to approve the application, the following condition should be applied:

Cycle parking
No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

Representations:

One representation has been received from the occupier of a neighbouring flat at No. 17 objecting the application on the following grounds:

- Privacy light and noise – concern that the roof terrace would set a precedent. Previous application was for residential use of the area as two balconies and would limit numbers/use, the application would allow one larger balcony and potential for larger group of people – loss of privacy and noise issues despite proposed screening.
- Overdevelopment – concern that the building could later be converted to one large residential apartment and would be problematic if used for large groups or holiday lets.
- Larger gardens in the conservation are slowly being eroded with extensions to neighbouring plots and gardens divided/boarded off, proposals at No.19 would add to the flow of the building through the gardens being lost.

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036 (WBC 2023): Policies:
SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
SS1 (Spatial Strategy)
DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment)
DM11 (Protecting and Enhancing Employment Sites)
DM15 (Sustainable Transport and Active Travel)
DM16 (Sustainable Design)
DM20 (Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage)
DM22 (Pollution)
DM24 (The Historic Environment)

National Planning Policy Framework (DHLUC 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

Paragraph 11 identifies at the heart of the NPPF a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole.

Although surrounding uses in the vicinity of the site are predominantly residential, the site is located within a key office location where employment uses are protected against loss of other uses. Policy DM11 states that these key employment areas are essential in maintaining a strong and diverse supply of employment sites and premises to meet the needs of the local economy and, given the significant land constraints, the Council are seeking to protect them for employment uses appropriate to their location. Only in exceptional circumstances, where there is clear and robust evidence that the introduction of alternative uses is required to retain a diverse and resilient local economy, will such a change be considered.

The proposals involve a reconfiguration and extension to the existing vacant office accommodation including a new reception area, staff room facilities and additional office space. The proposals would support the continued use as an office within this protected employment area and enhance the provision through additional employment floorspace in this sustainable location within walking and cycling distance of public transport connections and the town centre.

The proposal should principally be assessed in relation to the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF and weighed against the effects of the development proposal on visual amenity and the character and appearance of the conservation area, the effects on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, highway and parking considerations and sustainability.

Visual Amenity and impact on the Conservation Area

The site is within the Farncombe Road Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes the essential architectural character of the area is defined by its large villas. The prevalent features of these include:-

- Two, occasionally three storeys
- Proportions: mostly double-fronted (3 bays), with overall height, length and width being roughly equal
- Shallow-pitched, hipped roofs in natural slate
- White stucco or yellow brick elevations
- Canted bays
- Timber sashes with horns – single or double paned
- String course dividing ground and first floors
- Decorative eaves cornice

- Quoining – vermiculated (eg No.6 Farncombe Road and No's 101-103 Brighton Road) or plain (eg No.9 Farncombe Road)
- Classically inspired doorways, ith columns, pilasters, consoles etc
- Four or six panelled wooden doors
- Slender, rendered chimney stacks, many have been removed, but the chimney breasts are still evident in the external walls, distinguishing original villas from the pastiche villas of Horton Court

It also notes the gable end of a flint building has survived as part of the southern boundary wall of Griffin House which may be remnants of pre-Victorian development.

An enhancement opportunity is identified for No.19 in the replacement of the front boundary wall.

The current application follows approval of a part two storey/part single storey extension of the same size and overall form in 2017 with later amendments approved in 2018 (AWDM/0365/17 and AWDM/0005/18 refer), although this previous scheme involved the residential conversion of the building and loss of office space. However, in terms of the physical works, those proposed in the current scheme would be similar.

As before, the proposed extension would be set in from each side wall and would step down in scale from the main building where it would not have a dominant appearance or be readily visible within the conservation area. The previous approval in 2013 was for the same scale of extension and similarly designed with a shallow pitched hipped roof and rear roof terrace. The Council's Design and Conservation Architect has commented that the shallower eaves proposed here would look particularly weak and should be reversed. The applicant has responded to those concerns by increasing the eaves overhang detail which would match the original building detailing. Fenestration has also been confirmed as timber, with window surrounds and cornice bands included in the revised details as well as decorative quoining to match the existing building. A conservation type rooflight has also been stipulated on the drawings for the side rooflight window. Whilst some details have been amended from the previous scheme such as the window configuration at the rear, this would not be readily visible and in the context of the previously approved scheme the overall effect of the development would be similar. The comments of the Worthing Society are noted but it is considered that a refusal would not be justified on design or visual amenity grounds in this context. Matching materials and detailing including windows can be secured by conditions.

The applicant proposes railings to the front boundary wall with the inclusion of a new central pier to match the other piers as well as inward opening metal gates to each entrance. Although other boundary treatments in the street largely consist of flint and brick walls, the proposals would represent an improvement in terms of providing enclosure and some coherence in terms of height where the wall at No.19 is particularly low compared with others. The Council's Design and Conservation Architect has noted that there are vestiges of railings embedded in the coping stone of the wall indicating that there were railings here at one stage in the building's life but they would not have looked like those as originally submitted. He notes that the solid mental panel at the lower half of the vehicular gates would also be particularly out of place. Revised details have been provided in response to these concerns indicating a

vertical railing design and omitting the panels on each gate which would appear more sympathetic to those originally submitted. Precise details of the railings and gates can be agreed by condition in the interests of visual amenity.

The proposed extension and railings would not directly impact upon the protected tree but a condition is recommended for tree protection measures during the course of the proposed works.

Residential Amenity

There are high boundary walls to each side of the site forming the boundary with the neighbouring properties to the north and south.

The extent of the proposed rear extension would roughly align with the existing rear projection of No.17 to the south and would be approximately 4.35- 6.2 metres from the boundary on this side where the angle of the boundary widens this distance towards the rear. No. 17 has its main flank wall 6.5 metres to the south of this where there are windows and door in its side wall which are partly enclosed by an external staircase which gives access to the first floor flat and means of escape to the second floor flat. The first floor flat has its front door in the side wall together with a bathroom window and secondary bedroom window. At second floor level, above the extension, there is a door and kitchen window in the side wall. This relationship does not appear to have altered since the previous applications were considered and given the relationship on this side and separation distances, it is considered that the proposals would not give rise to any significant loss of light or outlook.

On the north side, No.21 comprises of a 5 storey office building separated from the application by a side vehicular access and high boundary wall. Given the relationship on this side and the scale and positioning of the proposed, there would be no significant impact to the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers.

No first floor side windows are proposed in the extension and the first floor balconies would include a 1.8 metre high privacy screens at each end. The extension angles away from the boundary with No. 17 so views into the rear garden of No. 17 would not be direct. A side rooflight is proposed to the existing lean-to roof on the north side, but this would be at a high level and would not pose any significant threat to amenity.

In terms of the impact arising from the use of the roof terrace area, it is noted that the previous application allowed a similar arrangement albeit to serve two of the proposed flats at that time, rather than offices in this case. Screening to the north and south is proposed to restrict overlooking of neighbouring properties. Full details will be secured by condition. It is also considered appropriate to restrict the use of the terrace to minimise noise and disturbance to neighbouring residents. Therefore a condition will be included which limits use of the terrace to between 7am and 9pm only. At the rear there is a distance of more than 35 metres separating the roof terrace from dwellings in Madeira Avenue to the west and so it is considered that it would not give rise to any significant loss of amenity.

Highways and Access

The application proposes no alterations the existing car parking arrangements, indicating that 4 car parking spaces would be retained at the frontage. A cycle store has also been included at the rear of the building. The Highway Authority considers that the proposed development would not be anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of use of the existing vehicular access and whilst the proposal would represent a shortfall in parking against the WSCC parking standards, any overspill can be accommodation on street or within nearby paid for provision. Furthermore the site is considered to be a sustainable location, well connected to the town centre and public transport connections and with the provision of cycle storage to encourage alternative modes of transport, users need not be reliant on the use of the private car. A condition is recommended to secure the provision of cycle storage to encourage alternative modes of transport to the private car.

Sustainable Development

The applicant has outlined the following measures for sustainable design:

The proposal has been designed to meet or exceed the Building Regulations in terms of insulation, energy efficiency and water usage. This will be demonstrated by means of as-designed and as-built heat-loss calculations and EPC.

The site is located within a conservation area, and the conservation officer has encouraged a design for the extensions that references and compliments the existing building architecture. As such, no brises soleil or shutters are proposed. The proposed extension has deep eaves (to match existing), which provide some solar shading on the West elevation, which has the most glazing. The South elevation does not have a large amount of glazing. Cross ventilation is possible throughout the building. At Building Regulations stage overheating calculations will be carried out and, if necessary, solar reflective glazing can be installed on the West-facing elevation. The use of an existing property reduces construction waste and all waste materials taken out of the property will be sorted and suitably recycled. Any construction products that can be re-used on site will be.

The requirement for B rating Energy Performance Certificate would go be beyond the scope of this application for an extension to the existing building.

The NPPF requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environments by minimising impact on and providing net gains for biodiversity. Local Plan policy DM18 requires the protection, conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. The proposal is for an extension and would be positioned on the site of an existing hardstanding within the rear garden area where it would not cause any significant harm to biodiversity.

In relation to drainage, conditions are recommended for precise details of surface water drainage to be agreed which must prioritise the use of source control Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Hours of construction
4. Tree protection barriers during works
5. Surface Water Drainage scheme to be agreed
6. Maintenance and Management of sustainable drainage scheme to be agreed
7. Precise details of windows and doors to be agreed
8. Precise details of railings, gates and posts to be agreed
9. Matching materials and detailing
10. Cycle parking to be agreed
11. Screening to roof terrace to be installed
12. Hours of use of roof terrace limited to between 07:00 and 21:00 hrs

Informative
The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

Case Officer: Rebekah Hincke Date: 03.06.2024

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 04/06/2024