Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0987/14 Recommendation – Refuse

Site: Units 1-2 Cecil Road, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 8HN

Proposal: Outline application (including details of access, layout and scale) for the demolition of existing commercial buildings and the erection of 2no. 2-bed dwellings of 1.5 storeys in height and 1no. 2-bed single storey bungalow

Date of site visit: 5 August 2014

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

This application relates to a small commercial yard at the rear of dwellings in Penhill Road, Cecil Road and The Grovelands. It contains two single storey workshop buildings at either end of the yard with a central courtyard. The site is accessed via a narrow access road running to the north of 1 Cecil Road. The buildings are currently occupied by a car sales and workshop use.

Outline permission is sought to demolish the existing commercial buildings and to erect 3 dwellings, comprising 2 no. 2-bed detached 1.5 storey houses at the western end of the site and 1no. 2-bed detached bungalow at the eastern end. Access, layout and scale are to be considered at this stage with all other matters reserved. The application is accompanied by a layout plan and by elevations and floor plans which indicate that the houses will be 6m high with first floor accommodation in the roof space, while the bungalow will be 4.8m high.

The development is proposed to be car-free, with all parking to be provided on surrounding streets. Cycle storage is to be provided on-site for all the dwellings. The access will continue to be used by a number of properties in Cecil Road and Penhill Road who enjoy a right of access.

Relevant site history

Various applications over the years, the most recent being L/87/96 – car valeting, light mechanical repairs and storage of vehicles plus car trade centre (max 10 cars) Unit 1 – approved July 1996

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highway Officer** has requested further information. Whilst the site's sustainable location is appreciated a parking survey should assess two aspects;

- parking capacity - the amount of available parking space within the survey area and,
- parking stress- the number of vehicles which are parked within the survey area at a specific time, most commonly at peak times of residential parking demand.

Surveys between the hours of 22.00 to 05:30 must be undertaken on two separate weekday mornings (i.e. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday). Public holidays and school holidays should be avoided. Undertaking a survey on a date when an event is taking place locally may impact the results of the survey should also be avoided. The reason for selecting these times is to capture maximum demand for residential parking, i.e. when most residents will be at home.

These two aspects combined will allow us to determine the level of parking available and if vehicles associated with new developments can be accommodated on street without impacting on existing residents parking amenity or highway safety.

Some consideration needs to be given to the servicing of the site. If the site is to be served by a refuse vehicle, swept path diagrams of how such a vehicle could turn and enter the highway in the forward gear should be provided.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health Officer** has requested that a full contaminated land condition be imposed on any permission. Due to the proximity of the development site to existing homes they have also requested a condition regarding the hours of demolition and construction - 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm Saturday. No working Sundays or Bank Holidays - and an informative on any permission advising the applicant that they will need to apply for a Demolition Notice under the Building Act 1984.

The **Economic Development Officer** has requested marketing evidence as these commercial premises are currently occupied and she is unaware of any marketing undertaken for these units, to secure new commercial occupation or demonstrate that they are no longer suitable for employment use.

Lancing Parish Council: Object as it is considered to be an overdevelopment of a small back site and would have a negative impact on the area. The access is too narrow and any development would overlook and be overlooked in all directions.

Representations

17 letters received from the occupiers of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 14, 17 Cecil Road, 11, 12, 14 The Grovelands, 34, 36, 48 Penhill Road raising the following objections:-

- Increased parking problems in Cecil Road
- Properties will be very close to existing homes which surround the site
- Taller buildings than existing will lead to loss of privacy and light

- Overbearing
- Increased noise
- Overdevelopment
- Poor access, especially for emergency vehicles and construction vehicles
- Inadequate sewage infrastructure
- Impact on stability of neighbouring dwellings
- Possible asbestos in existing buildings
- Wheelie bins at kerbside is impractical and unsightly
- How would delivery vehicles, etc be prevented from accessing site?
- Fire hazard
- No need for additional houses as Council can already meet annual housing target
- Does not comply with Council policy for car parking
- Noise and dust pollution from development

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH2 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Control Standard No.2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats' 'Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards for New Homes' (ADC 2010)
West Sussex Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (WSCC 2003)
West Sussex 'Guidance for Parking in New Residential Developments' and 'Residential Parking Demand Calculator' (WSCC 2010)
The Provision of Service Infrastructure Related to New Development in West Sussex – Part 1 (WSCC 1999)
National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site is located within the built-up area and is not identified or allocated for any particular use or development in the Local Plan. Residential infilling and redevelopment of unidentified sites, as in this case, is needed in order to meet the Council's 5 year housing land supply required by the NPPF. Priority is given to use of previously-developed land.

In this case, the site contains two workshops which are both occupied. The applicant has confirmed that the premises have been marketed for over 12 months with no interest from long term tenants. The current occupiers of both units are on a short term lease at a low rent to keep the buildings occupied but the units are not seen as attractive to modern business users. There is no specific policy to protect the units from redevelopment and it could be argued that the removal of the workshops would be beneficial in terms of residential amenity. However, any new development should respect the character of the local area and the amenities of existing and proposed residents.

Visual amenity, character and density

The proposed development would involve the removal of two single storey buildings of utilitarian design. They can be glimpsed along the access from Cecil Road but are largely hidden from public viewpoints. The proposed new dwellings would be larger, particularly the 2 houses at the western end, but they would also have limited visual impact in the wider area.

However, the site is surrounded by 2 storey terraced houses in Cecil Road and Penhill Road and by more modern 2 storey terraced houses in The Grovelands. The proposed dwellings (1 no. bungalow and 2no. detached 1.5 storey high houses) would not be sympathetic to the surrounding character and pattern of development and would appear as rather cramped compared with the more spacious plots which surround the site. The limited amenity space for each new dwelling and the poor relationship between the proposed dwellings, as well as the poor relationship with existing dwellings, would be unsatisfactory and serves to highlight the overdeveloped nature of the proposal. In visual terms, the proposal fails to improve the character and quality of the area and would therefore conflict with Section 7 of the NPPF (Requiring Good Design).

Residential amenity – Proposed Occupiers

The proposed layout is considered to be very tight and offers limited amenity space for future residents, particularly for the two houses at the western end of the site. The rear garden depth for those dwellings is just over 4m while the garden area for the houses is approximately 30sqm and 35sqm. This fails to meet the Council's adopted space standards which specify a minimum 85sqm for a small detached house.

The relationship between the proposed houses and the proposed bungalow is also poor, with a distance of just 6m between them. The Council's DC Standard No.2 requires a minimum 11m between the rear of a 2 storey dwelling and the side of a bungalow. While the relationship here is front/side, it does demonstrate the lack of space available within the site to accommodate 3 dwellings. Furthermore, there is little space available for front gardens, landscaping and pathways which adds to the unacceptable nature of the development.

The occupiers of the bungalow unit are likely to be overlooked by the rear windows of the houses in Cecil Road which are only 12m away and by the houses to the south in The Grovelands. The cramped nature of the layout and the close proximity of existing houses make it very difficult to achieve a satisfactory development here and the amenities of the proposed occupiers will suffer as a result.

Residential amenity – Existing Occupiers

The site is surrounded by houses and the tight layout proposed is likely to lead to a loss of amenity for both existing and proposed residents. In particular, the proximity of the proposed dwellings at the western end to the surrounding houses is likely to result in an increased perception of

overlooking, particularly to the rear garden of 34 Penhill Road, which runs directly to the west of the site, just over 4m from the rear of the proposed houses.

Parking and Access

No parking spaces are proposed for this development with the applicants relying on surrounding streets to accommodate the parking demands associated with this proposal. West Sussex County Council has requested that a parking survey is carried out by the applicants to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity on the road to accommodate additional cars without impacting on existing residents parking amenity or highway safety. The applicants have failed to provide such a survey.

Cecil Road in particular is heavily parked and there are concerns that a residential development of three houses may have some adverse impact on the area. Without evidence to the contrary, the lack of parking provision within the development is considered to be a reasonable ground for refusal.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the reasons:

1. Having regard to the limited area of the site and its relationship to existing residential properties, the proposal would result in a cramped and unsatisfactory residential development which would be harmful to the character of the area and detrimental to the amenities of existing and future residents through overlooking, overbearing impact ,sense of enclosure and lack of adequate amenity space. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2), Development Control Standard No.2 'Space Around New Dwellings and Flats', 'Good Practice Guidance Note: Internal Space Standards for New Homes' and the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

2. The proposal fails to provide for car parking to meet the needs of the development and, without evidence to show that there is adequate capacity on the surrounding road network, the proposal is likely to lead to a harmful impact on existing residents' parking amenity and highway safety. The proposal is therefore contrary to the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH2), West Sussex 'Guidance for Parking in New Residential Developments' and 'Residential Parking Demand Calculator' (WSCC 2010), and the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

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

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and discussing those with the Applicant. However, the issues are so fundamental to the proposal that it has not been possible to negotiate a

satisfactory way forward and due to the harm which has been clearly identified within the reason(s) for the refusal, approval has not been possible.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 16 September 2014

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 16 September 2014