Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1278/13 Recommendation – Approve

Site: 81 Underdown Road, Southwick, Brighton West Sussex, BN42 4HA

Proposal: Change of use from undertakers/offices to offices only with new disabled access/entrance

Date of site visit: 5 November 2013

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a two storey building located on a 'backland' site at the rear of 79 Underdown Road. It is predominantly used as offices for A. F. Pilbeam Building Contractors but there is also a mortuary in connection with a funeral director use on the southern part of the ground floor. There is currently a roller shutter door on the front elevation serving the undertakers.

It is proposed to change the use of the undertakers to offices. To this end, the roller shutter is to be replaced with a new ramped public entrance with windows to match the existing windows on the ground floor. The existing entrance is to become a staff entrance. At the rear, a new window is to be installed at ground floor. Internally, the mortuary is to become a reception area with a board room at the rear.

The site adjoins a 3 storey block of flats to the north and allotments to the west (rear). The side of the building abuts the rear garden of 75 Underdown Road which is at a slightly lower level than the car park serving the offices.

Relevant site history

None relevant

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The proposal could give rise to the site generating vehicular traffic over an extended period. However, the number of movements would not be anticipated to be particularly significant and would not be expected to exacerbate any existing issues, nor warrant an objection on the basis of safety or capacity. Whilst the Planning Authority will no doubt wish to consider matters of amenity for local residents, no highway objection would be raised.

Adur & Worthing Councils: The Environmental Health Officer has no objections

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AE16
Assessment of Saved Policies (ADC 2013)
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises upgrading of existing business premises in the built up area and can be supported in principle. The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and the effect on the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings. The loss of the undertakers is not contrary to any specific policy.

Visual amenity

The loss of the roller shutter door and its replacement with a new entrance will be a visual improvement to the building.

Residential amenity

The alterations will not unduly affect the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. There is the potential for more activity closer to the boundary with the nearest dwelling as a result of the new position of the entrance, but it is not considered that this would be to such an extent as to have an adverse impact.

Views towards the nearest garden and rear of dwellings in Underdown Road will be possible from the new window but overlooking is already possible from the car park and from existing upper floor windows in the building. The additional impact on residential amenity is not considered to be significant therefore.

Accessibility and parking

No additional parking is proposed. The proposal will remove an undertakers business from the site and replace it with a rationalised office building with new reception area and board room. The impact on traffic generation is not considered to be significant.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development is within the built-up area and comprises the upgrading of existing business premises without detracting from the local environment. It can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to

the amenities of neighbouring properties and without detraction from highway safety. It would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AE16) or the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Materials to match existing building
3. Approved plans

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

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 12 November 2013

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 12 November 2013