Expiry 27/02/07

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0010/07 Recommendation - Permit

Site: **104 Sompting Road Lancing West Sussex BN15 9LQ**

Proposal: **Change of use of chalet bungalow to dental practice on groundfloor with one-bedroom flat above**

The Application

The application site is located on the north side of Sompting Road. The site currently contains a two storey, four bedroom dwelling with a rear conservatory extension and a detached single garage at the end of the driveway on the eastern side of the dwelling.

The application is for a change of use of the property from a single dwelling to a dental surgery with a one bedroom flat. The applicant will utilise the existing internal layout for both activities and no external changes to the building are proposed.

The dental surgery will cover the ground floor of the building (115m²) and will consist of three treatment rooms, a reception/waiting area, staff room and toilet facilities. The applicant proposes that the surgery will employ nine staff. The present surgery utilised by the applicant (7 Cecil Road, Lancing) will be reverted back to full residential use.

The upper floor will contain the residential flat which will be occupied by the applicant and principal dentist. The proposed flat is 57m² in size and contains one bedroom, a bathroom, combined kitchen and living room and storage space.

There is an existing formed accessway to the site which is not proposed to be changed. The application makes provision for three on site car parking spaces, one within the existing garage and two within the single file driveway area.

The north side of Sompting Road has a predominantly residential use and most sites contain a detached dwelling of various styles and most with off street parking. Both neighbouring sites are detached residential dwellings. The south side of Sompting Road is generally also residential use, although opposite the site there is a convenience store and to the west of the site is a large park. Approximately 25 metres to the west of the site the road takes a sharp bend to the north.

Consultations and Representations

Consultees
West Sussex County Council Highways and Transport Services have noted that the proposed on site parking is a significant reduction from that usually required for the expected number of vehicle movements. However, given the location of the property and the nature of the proposal, on street parking is acceptable and no highways objection has been raised, provided some mitigation measures are put in place to encourage alternative modes of transport.

The Adur District Council Environmental Health Officer has not raised an objection to the proposal but suggests that the residential accommodation is only used by the owner/occupier of the dental surgery to prevent risk of disturbance.

The Lancing Parish Council has objected to the proposal as they have real concerns over the location of the property (on a blind bend/corner of a busy road) and the parking problems that would result from a change of use.

Third Parties
No representations have been received from third parties in relation to the proposal.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur District Local Plan: AG1, AH9, ACS4, AT12
West Sussex Structure Plan: DEV1, DEV4, DEV5
Development Control Standard No. 4 "Flat Conversions"

Planning Assessment

The Local Plan notes that dentists provide an essential community service and the need for new or improved premises must be recognised. Policy ACS4 states that the District Planning Authority will permit the development of facilities for doctors, dentists and other health practitioners, subject to: (a) effect on amenity of surrounding dwellings being judged to be acceptable; and (b) on-site car parking arrangements and access to the public highway being acceptable under Policy AT12.

Residential Amenity
The surrounding properties are all residential in nature, with the exception of the convenience store opposite the site. This is a low density neighbourhood with all of the closest dwellings being detached and on large sections. The closest dwelling is that located immediately to the east, 102 Sompting Road, which is a chalet bungalow with side windows located around 4 metres from the application dwelling.

The application proposes to utilise the existing building only and does not propose to make any external alterations which could impact on the privacy,

outlook or sunlight of neighbouring occupiers. There are existing windows in both side elevations of the dwellings (including at first floor level on the eastern side) but these will not cause any additional overlooking effects from those already existing. It is noted that the windows which will relate to the three treatment rooms and the windows which will relate to the living and bedroom areas in the flat do not look directly into the neighbouring properties.

The activity is not expected to generate a significant amount of noise given its nature and as it is contained entirely indoors. The anticipated hours of operation are within normal working hours (Monday to Friday 8am-6pm and Saturday mornings 8am-1pm). The applicant is willing to accept a condition restricting operations to within these hours. This will ensure that any disturbance to neighbours from visitors arriving at the site will be generally limited to daytime hours.

Car Parking & Access
Policy AT12 requires that a use of land is able to be safely and efficiently serviced for access without detriment to the highway and its users, be accessible by public transport, provide safe and adequate access to pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities and provide appropriate parking space.

The applicant has stated that the dental practice will generate approximately 35 vehicle movements per day which is a significant increase on the existing residential use. The applicant does not however propose to make any changes to the existing on site parking situation. The site contains a driveway of a width of 3 metres. This extends along the eastern boundary of the site to a single garage located at the rear of the dwelling. The applicant proposes that the garage can be utilised as parking space for the residential use of the site, while the remainder of the driveway area will be suitable for two further parking spaces.

Highways have commented that the WSCC car parking standards recommend that one space is provided per practitioner and four spaces per examining room plus one space for the residential use of the site. In this case, the maximum number of parking spaces required is 16 and the three proposed is considered a significant reduction.

The applicant suggests that on street parking will be appropriate for visitors to the practice. Sompting Road in the vicinity of the practice does not have obvious day time parking congestion problems and is wide enough for vehicles to proceed in both directions without being affected by parked vehicles. Most properties along this road have on site parking for resident's vehicles. The site is also located close to other streets without significant parking congestion where visitors could potentially park.

On consideration of this matter, Highways have noted that the nature of the activity will mean that on street parking will be short term and should not add significant, consistent pressure on the existing situation and is deemed acceptable.

It is also noted that the dental practice is located on a bus route with bus stops right outside the property. It is anticipated that a number of visitors will arrive at the practice by this means which would reduce pressure for car parking. Highways have suggested that the applicant encourage the use of alternative sustainable transport through the production of a Staff Travel Plan (in consultation with the County Business Travelwise Officer) and by providing covered secure cycle parking facilities on the site.

The other matter for consideration is the adequacy of the existing access to safely accommodate users. Highways originally noted that they did not support the intensification of use of this access as it is located approximately 25 metres from a sharp bend in the road, which restricts the visibility of oncoming traffic from the west to vehicles leaving the site. As there is no turning space on site, vehicles would be required to reverse off site which would be a potential safety hazard. However, this objection has been dropped as the lower provision for on site parking means that the use of the access will not be significantly intensified from the existing residential use.

Residential Use
The first floor of the building is proposed to be retained for residential use as a one bedroom flat. The flat conversion will utilise the existing layout of the first floor, with one bedroom being converted to a kitchen/living area and all other rooms being retained unchanged. The size of the flat and individual rooms, the internal layout and access to natural daylight are all consistent with the Development Control Standards. Ample amenity space is provided for in the large rear garden (approximately 100m^2).

Environmental Health have suggested that the amenity of residents of this flat could be affected by disturbance from the dental surgery below and have suggested a condition is placed on the approval limiting the occupancy of the flat to the owner/occupier of the dental surgery.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed dental surgery would provide a valuable community service and the use 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, AH9, ACS4, AT12) and the West Sussex Structure Plan (DEV1, DEV4, DEV5).

Conditions

1. C1Ci

2. The dental surgery shall only be open for the treatment of patients during the hours of:

8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday inclusive;
8.00am to 1.00pm Saturday; and
No working shall take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to comply with policies AG1 and ACS4 of the Adur District Local Plan and DEV1 of the West Sussex Structure Plan.

3. The use hereby permitted shall not be commenced until provision has been made for covered and secure cycle storage facilities on site and such provision shall thereafter only be used for the parking of cycles incidental to the use of the site.

   Reason: To ensure adequate parking for cycles clear of the highway and to comply with policy AT12 of the Adur District Local Plan and DEV4-5 of the West Sussex Structure Plan.

4. The use hereby permitted shall not be commenced until a Staff Travel Plan encouraging the use of sustainable transport has been ~~produced and a copy~~ submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Information on producing such a plan can be obtained by contacting West Sussex County Council Business Travelwise Officer, ~~Mr A Mouland, phone~~ (tel. 01243 642105).

   Reason: To encourage the use of sustainable transport and to comply with policy AT12 of the Adur District Local Plan and DEV4-5 of the West Sussex Structure Plan.

5. The residential flat hereby permitted shall only be occupied by the owner/occupier of the dental surgery.

   Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to comply with policies AH9 and ACS4 of the Adur District Local Plan and DEV1 of the West Sussex Structure Plan.

Case Officer: .....

Date: 13/02/07

Head of Planning & Community Division: .....

Date: 15.02.07

Chairman of Planning & Regulatory Committee: A.J. Mills

Date: 23/02/07