Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1968/22 Recommendation: Refuse

Site: Elreg House, 58 Rosslyn Road, Shoreham-by-sea

Proposal: First floor extension above existing ground floor rear wing to create 6 new care rooms.

Date of Site Visit: 24 August 2022

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

The application property, known as Elreg House, is a former dwelling which has been used as a residential care home since 1962. It lies on the south side of Rosslyn Road, close to the junction with Rosslyn Avenue at the eastern end. The building has been extended on a number of previous occasions including with 2no. single storey flat roofed extensions at the rear. There are a number of outbuildings within the rear garden.

There are currently 32 rooms. This application proposes to provide 6 new rooms within a first floor extension above the central ground floor rear extension. The extension will be 6m tall with a shallow pitched roof. It will be 21m long and will come to within 1m of the rear boundary. It will have a mansard-style roof with tiling to match the main building.

The application follows the refusal last year for first floor extensions over both of the ground floor extensions.

A planning statement submitted with the application explains:

"*Due to the nature of small care facilities such as this, it is vital that the care home is able to provide more bedrooms to therefore generate more income to retain its current and future viability. This will allow the care home to maintain the high level of care for current and future residents and protect/ provide employment space for sponsored workers…..This upgrade is considered absolutely necessary in order to ensure that the care home remains financially viable*."

It sets out a number of ways in which the care home has been hit financially in recent years, citing the Covid Pandemic, the current economic downturn, lack of staff

following Brexit and the pandemic, and significant heating costs. The statement goes on to stress that:

"*The provision of extra rooms is an absolute requirement to increase revenues to the home and help to prevent its closure*."

However, no viability assessment has been submitted with the application to support these claims.

The statement also refers to policy support for specialist accommodation for the elderly as being another reason to support the application.

Planning History:

ADC/0377/10 - Extension of pitched roof (including front, rear and west side dormers) to form additional single-occupancy ensuite bedrooms (increasing number of bedrooms from 21 to 24) – approved

ADC/0008/10 - Enlarged replacement single-storey east side/rear extension to provide enlarged dining room and bedrooms with ensuite facilities (increasing total number of bedrooms from 19 to 21) - approved

SU/190/84 - Extension to provide 7 single rooms and alterations to common rooms – approved

AWDM/0320/14 - Single storey rear (south) extension to existing care home to provide 3 no. additional bedrooms - approved

AWDM/0190/22 - Retention of open sided timber structure for outside meeting space and separate detached building for staff members to change into protective clothing - approved

AWDM/1280/22 - Two first floor extensions above existing ground floor rear wings - refused for the following reason:

The proposed extensions, by reason of their height, length, design and proximity to the site boundaries, are an overdevelopment of the site which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings and would be overbearing to neighbouring occupiers causing unacceptable harm to residential amenity through loss of light and outlook. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan and paragraph 130 of the NPPF

Consultations:

West Sussex County Council: The Highways Authority advises that the supporting documents and plans have not addressed highways matters raised under AWDM/1280/22, therefore the applicant is requested to clarify matters related to the existing accesses.
Vehicular Accesses The latest google mapping indicates that the site can be accessed via two vehicular access onto Rosslyn Road. However, this has not been demonstrated on the plan provided, therefore it is unclear if the existing access to the east is to be closed off as a result of the proposal? The proposed plans demonstrate parking layout accommodating 4 vehicles however the existing western access does not appear wide enough, therefore it may result in vehicles bumping off the full height kerb. Any unused access would require reinstatement of the kerb. Should the applicant propose alterations to the existing access arrangements, this should be demonstrated on a plan and implemented under a WSCC Highways licence to specifications agreed with them.
Trip Generation While a formal trip generation assessment has not been provided by the applicant, the Local Highways Authority (LHA) would be minded to advise that residential care homes are not traditionally significant generators of vehicular movements. Consideration is also given to the existing number of staff and residents at the site. On balance it would be extremely difficult to substantiate that the proposal would result in a material increase in vehicular movements which would result in any severe cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network.
Car Parking WSCC does not currently have an adopted parking standard for C2 use. As such, it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate sufficient parking provision. The superseded WSCC Parking Standards outline the following parking demand for C2 use: 1 parking space per 20 residents, 1 visitor parking space per 8 residents, and 1 staff parking spaces per 5 resident. Two additional part time staff will be employed when compared to the existing arrangement. Based on the number of bedrooms against the superseded guidance up to 6 parking spaces in total, would be expected. It would be difficult to substantiate that the potential shortfall of two car parking spaces would create a highway safety issue. The Planning Authority may wish to consider the potential impacts of this development on on-street car parking.
Conclusion In principle 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. However, further clarification is sought, regarding the access arrangements, as described above. Please raise these issues with the applicant and re-consult.

Adur and Worthing Councils: Technical Services: No comments received. Previously had provided the following comments: Flood risk- The application is within flood zone 1, but is shown to be at risk from surface water flooding. The proposals are at first floor, we therefore have no objection on flood risk grounds.

Surface water drainage- the application is for change of use. We have no conditions to request. Any alterations to surface water drainage must be designed and constructed in accordance with building regulations.

Public Health: No comments received. Previously had advised that there are no EH objections in principle, however, it is a very tight site and they would want to ensure that the construction phase of any new development is undertaken with as little impact on nearby residents and existing residents of the home as possible. Therefore a CMP condition was recommended to be attached to any permission given which should cover residential liaison, parking, deliveries, material storage, hours of construction etc.

Private Sector Housing: No comment

Southern Water: Standard advice

Representations

11 objections received from addresses in Rosslyn Avenue, Rosslyn Road and Gordon Road:

- Previous application was refused on grounds of overdevelopment
- Very little space left on site
- Unbearable and overbearing
- Out of scale with development in the area
- Unneighbourly
- Visible from outside of the site
- Increased light pollution
- Increased pressure on on-street parking
- Loss of light, privacy and outlook
- Design is out of keeping
- Close to site boundary
- Increased noise and disturbance
- Inappropriate location for further extensions

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15, 28, 33
'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.2 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings''
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

Planning Assessment

Principle

The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Visual amenity

The proposed extension is considered to be an overdevelopment of the site. While the proposal is for a first floor extension over only one of the rear ground floor extensions, rather than both as previously proposed, the already cramped nature of the site and its proximity to surrounding residential properties, means that the proposal will continue to cause harm. The rear garden of this property is already intensively developed with the ground floor extensions and outbuildings, leaving little room to the boundaries. The addition of a first floor over the central wing will exacerbate the cramped feeling within the site and the scale of the proposal is considered to be out of character and harmful to the site and its surroundings. Views of the extension will be visible from Rosslyn Avenue to the east and the design is not considered to be sympathetic to the character of the original building.

Residential amenity

The site is surrounded by residential dwellings and the scale and proximity of the extension to the southern boundary will result in it being very visible from properties in Gordon Road in particular. While a minimum 22m will separate the rear of those houses from the extension, its height and scale will have an unsightly impact on views from the rear of those properties, in particular 77 and 79 Gordon Road, where it will sit 6m high just 1m from the rear boundary.

The central position of the extension does mean that it will be further from No. 17 Rosslyn Avenue to the east than previously proposed and will have less of an overbearing impact. However, 5 bedroom windows are proposed on the east elevation which will face towards Rosslyn Avenue. No. 17 has rear windows which face the site and, at a distance of just 12m to the boundary and 17m to the rear of No.17, there is likely to be some loss of privacy, particularly to the first floor rear window. Corridor windows in the west side can be required to be obscure glazed by condition if the proposal was considered to be acceptable.

Parking and Access

The application specifies that there are 4 parking spaces at the front of the building. Recent alterations have widened the crossover and vehicles are able to access the forecourt without bumping over the kerb. WSCC Highways have advised that it

would be difficult to substantiate that the proposal would result in a material increase in vehicular movements which would result in any severe cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network.

With regard to parking, there is not currently an adopted parking standard for C2 use. The superseded WSCC Parking Standards suggests that up to 6 parking spaces in total would be expected for the number of bedrooms proposed. WSCC Highways have advised that it would be difficult to substantiate that the potential shortfall of two car parking spaces would create a highway safety issue. The potential impacts of the shortfall on on-street car parking should be considered. While it will add to pressure to park in the surrounding streets, it is not considered that the shortfall is so significant as to warrant refusal on this ground.

Other Considerations

The arguments about need and viability as set out in the Planning Statement have been considered, but they lack substantive evidence to back up the claims. Furthermore, even if a strong economic argument could be made for this development, it is considered that this would still be outweighed by the harm caused to the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings.

The site is considered to already be substantially developed to the extent that the site has reached its maximum potential in terms of extensions and it is unlikely that any further piecemeal additions will be acceptable.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the following reason:

The proposed extension, by reason of its height, length, design and proximity to the site boundary, is an overdevelopment of the site which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings and would cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity through loss of privacy. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan and paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

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: 18 January 2023

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 18 January 2023