Expired 25/6

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0225/08 **Recommendation - Permit**

Site: **St Marys House St Marys Road Shoreham-by-Sea West Sussex**

Proposal: **Dental practice sign (polyurethane material) at front to replace existing brass plaques and wooden support (application for Listed Building Consent)**

The Application

The application relates to the dentist's surgery located on the ground floor of St. Mary's House a part 18th Century, part 19th Century Grade II listed building, located on the north side of St. Mary's Road, obliquely opposite St Mary de Haura church.

Listed building consent is sought for a replacement sign on the front of the building on the east side of the entrance door. The sign would be 0.5m in width by 0.87m in height and would be of polyurethane material showing the dental practice 'face' logo, practice name and telephone number.

The proposed new sign would replace a more traditional series of brass plaques on a wooden frame in the shape of a letter 'T'. The existing plaques are a maximum of 0.46m wide by 0.93m in height.

On the west side of the entrance porch are two small name plaques (one being perspex and one in stainless steel) approximately 0.2m by 0.15m in size. There is also a circular blue plaque between two windows commemorating the original location of Lancing College (granted consent under SU/84/98). To the east of the frontage adjacent to a lower ground floor entrance door is mounted a small wooden hand-painted sign approximately 0.4m by 0.25m high advertising 'Barretts Chartered Accountants'.

At No.29 East Street (another Grade II listed building) is located another dentist surgery, on the east side of St. Mary's church. Listed Building consent was granted under SU/254/03/TP for a non-illuminated GRP (glass reinforced plastic) sign (0.6m wide by 0.9m high), showing the surgery logo, company information and phone number. Amendment from GRP to thinner matt-finished 'foamex' was subsequently agreed.

The applicant has submitted a Design and Access Statement within which they say that: "the practice has been located in the building for 35 years, and the current owner took over in 2007. Since this time they have overseen a major renovation and improvement works making the surgery thoroughly modern. To accentuate the changes there has been a rebranding of the practice in the face of competition from other local surgeries. The building is

set back from the road and the proposed signage would be sympathetic to the building and in harmony with the blue plaque and would reflect the distinctive nature of the dental practice, and would be more clearly visible from the road."

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: The County Council Conservation Architect states that this is a small advert sign that causes no harm. However in an earlier consultation concern was raised about the finish and the application of lettering.

Adur District Council: The Council's Town Centre and Streetscene Coordinator states that he would prefer the retention and/or use of more traditional materials for signage given the importance of the listed building and its location.

The Shoreham Society: State that they feel passionately about their community and the general increase in street signage is deplorable.

Adur District Conservation Advisory Group: Strongly object to the proposals. They feel a listed building will gradually be eroded.

Third Parties: The owner of St Mary's Cottage to the west object to the proposed sign and feel that the sign is not in keeping with the existing building, and would present an unprofessional appearance out of character to the building and its users. They feel it would be detrimental to the Conservation Area.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016 (WSCC 2005) (saved policies): CH5.
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AB7, AB9, AB11.
PPS 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' (ODPM 2005)
PPG15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (DoE 1994) and Circulars 01/01 and 09/05

Planning Assessment

The building is listed as Grade II. It is early 18th Century in the main and has a white-painted rendered frontage with a tiled mansard roof. It is in a very prominent position at the north end of East Street.

There is a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings and any features of special architectural or historic interest they possess.

Policies

Policy CH5 of the Structure Plan states that development should not be permitted unless statutorily listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest, and their settings, will be preserved and, where, possible, enhanced.

Policy AB7 of the Local Plan requires that development should not adversely affect the character of Listed Buildings. AB9 states that consent will only be granted if materials used are consistent with those originally used or which are typical of the locality and do not adversely affect the internal or external appearance or character of the building.

Affect on the character of the Listed Building

In terms of the size of the proposed sign, given the prominence of this important Listed Building within the streetscene, it is felt that the proposed sign as submitted would appear too large, giving a disproportionate and cramped appearance as there would have been no visible wall between the sign and the portico and window frames either side.

In addition, the applicant has been advised that the proposed materials would not be sympathetic to the listed building. By contrast, the existing brass plaques proposed to be replaced by the sign, are in keeping.

However, it is noted that a similar sign was permitted in 2003 on another nearby listed building (also a dentist's surgery) at No.29 East Street.

St Mary's House is a more significant building in historic terms and in a far more prominent position in relation to the church and the surrounding area. However, it is set back from the road by 11m and the sign would not appear as large as that at No.29. Nevertheless a reduction in size is essential to prevent it from appearing cramped and out of proportion to the wall on which it would be mounted.

With regard to the proposed materials, a wooden hand-painted sign would clearly be the most appropriate solution. However, given the sign approved at No.29, it would seem unreasonable to insist on this.

The applicant has amended the scheme so that now the sign has been reduced to 0.46m wide by 0.8m high and it would retain a gap on either side preventing it from appearing cramped or out of proportion. The applicant states that the sign will be in a matt finish and it is now considered to be acceptable.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposal would preserve the character of the listed building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses and would accord with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AB7-9) and the West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (CH5)

Subject to:-

1. C1Cii
2. C14Av – 13.06.08 (AB7-9 of the ADLP and CH5 of the WSSP)
3. The surface finish of the sign shall be in accordance with a sample to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to its erection.
   Reason: *In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with policy* AB7-9 of the ADLP and CH5 of the WSSP.
4. C19E

Case Officer: [signature] RB
Date: 02-07-08

Planning Services Manager: [signature]
Date: 3/7/08

Chairman of the Development Control Committee:
Date: A.J Mills 4/07/08