

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT – 16/10/2025

PROPOSAL:

Conversion of existing property (public house) into residential dwelling

SITE LOCATION:

The Gardeners Arms, West Street, Sompting, Worthing, West Sussex, BN15 0AR



PROPOSED STREET FRONTAGE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

About the site:

- Ground floor – previous use as public house – business no longer operating
- First floor – 3 bedroom flat accessed internally
- External space – rear garden with large decked area and parking area to the side

The building no longer operates as a public house and has been purchased by the current owner/applicant. It is currently vacant at ground floor level with occasional use by the owner for storage etc.

The first floor currently provides accommodation for the owner within the existing flat.

The building is understood to have no listing status, but is situated in the southern Conservation Area on West Street in Sompting.

The rear garden and side parking area is accessed from the existing West Street entrance and features a raised deck area, previously used for patrons of the public house. The application requests consent to convert the property into a private family dwelling with large garden area to the rear and parking to the front/side all as per plans submitted.

PROPOSED DWELLING:

The submitted proposals would provide the following:

4x bedrooms at first floor with one being en-suite

1x bedroom/en-suite within proposed newly converted loftspace

Lounge, 'snug', dining area, games room and kitchen at ground floor level

Cinema lounge at basement (cellar) level

Parking for up to 3 vehicles to the west of the property frontage

Garden to rear retaining existing deck (to be refurbished/upgraded)

Context

Existing

The site is located within the Sompting Conservation Area, with agricultural land in the surrounding area.

The site, set on West Street (south side) lies close to Sompting, Lancing and Worthing with easy and quick access to main roads leading out from the area.

Terraced and semi-detached housing, plus some larger detached houses, are of both traditional and contemporary design and situated on both sides of West street.

The existing property sits on a large plot – approx. 950m² - with level entrance access from the West Street. It has been previously providing parking for 8+ vehicles within the grounds, this being for the use of the public house patrons and residents of the first floor accommodation (refer to site plan provided with application documents)

Proposed

The application as submitted proposes to convert the property into a private family dwelling with large garden area to the rear and parking to the side. The proposals have been designed to retain the property features as existing on the street-scene with only re-decoration plus some frontage/parking area walling and hard/soft landscaping being proposed for practicality/aesthetic purposes.

Amount & Scale

PROPOSED GIA INFO:

GROUND FLOOR = 159.84m²

FIRST FLOOR = 81.08m²

CELLAR = 32.1m²

LOFT = 30.73m²

TOTAL = 303.75m²

TOTAL SITE AREA – 960m²

PROPOSED GARDEN SPACE RETAINED (excluding parking area) = 650m²

The existing footprint of the property will not be affected as part of the scheme.

The addition of a loftspace bedroom/en-suite forms part of the scheme and would be facilitated by converting the existing rear hip into a half-hip for improved headroom/floor-space within the bedroom. Additionally a side-facing/rear-facing dormer would be introduced to facilitate the new staircase and en-suite.

Design and Appearance

The scheme has been designed so as to not affect the street-scene and to ensure any visually noticeable works are to the rear of the property – ie rear dormer not visible from West Street, half-gable only visible from an oblique angle to the west of West Street and retaining the lower hipped section.

The scheme proposes refurbishment and/or replacement windows/doors depending on current state of repair upon inspection. These would be specified on a like-for-like basis thereby retaining the current look of the property ie timber sash windows, glazing bars/detailing etc.

Windows/doors to be paint-finished in a sympathetic and neutral tone

Proposed materials:

The current external walls above face brick level would be re-decorated in a sympathetic and neutral tone co-ordinating with the windows/doors.

The roof finish, considered to need replacing, is proposed as a natural slate.

The proposed dormer at the rear, although only visible from the rear of the site, is proposed with a traditional lead/zinc flat roof finish to enhance visual character.

The half-gable and the dormer elevations are proposed as slate finished to match the main roof

Principle of development

The development would provide a generous family home suitable for the use of the applicants and any future owners.

Parking facilities have been factored in and these will also provide a more visually pleasing area to the west of the property frontage whilst negating any impact on off-road parking in the village.

Footfall to the site would be reduced through conversion to a solely residential use.

Landscaping

Permeable surfaces will be implemented where available to aid the distribution of rainwater as part of the 'hard' landscaping works.

Water-butts and functional soakaways to Building Regulations approval would be employed for surface water and foul water disposal would consist of connection to the existing foul sewer system.

'Soft' landscaping:

A provisional basic indication of potential planting has been shown on the accompanying site plan to help offer an insight into the vision for the scheme. It is intended that a scheme, to be approved in co-ordination with the planning department, would include:

Hedgerow and wild garden areas to benefit local wildlife

Potted and planted flower and shrub options to provide visual benefits to the site to occupiers.

Border planting (raised and/or ground level) proposed to front garden area and parking area

Lawned areas to rear garden.

Planting would be specified to best suit the environment, enhance insect and nature usage and to be visually appealing all year round with minimal maintenance.

Any existing and mature trees will be retained taking into account any TPO's in place. As no actual construction is required for the scheme at ground level there is no predicted affect on existing planting/soft landscaping.

Boundary treatments are to include additional hedgerow where suitable and possible.

Other boundaries would include retention and repair of any existing flint walling and new fencing to approval of the authorities where required.

Access & Waste facilities

Access to the site from West Street requires no change and will remain as existing providing level and clear vehicular and pedestrian access.

Facilities on site for the storage and collection of waste will be provided within the rear garden space to latest requirements.

Noise Impact

Noise impact will be reduced through conversion to residential use.

Summary

- The scale and design of the proposed development is considered to present a sustainable and proportionate use of the site whilst enhancing and improving its appeal within the village. This would be of benefit to the village and the community as a whole.
- The architectural design of the proposed building would not be materially changed, thus reflecting the immediate/surrounding area through material/colour choice, scale, and architectural details.
- All measures have been considered to ensure enhancement of the site visually and practically for its change of use to residential.
- The loss of any architectural features, useable space, trees/shrubs/hedges have been avoided as part of the design process.
- The development would include a relevant, sensitive and sustainable landscaping scheme which would enhance enjoyment of occupiers and local residents whilst improving the local landscape.
- Parking provision would be improved and be more visually appealing.
- Footfall and vehicular traffic would be reduced substantially
- Noise levels would be reduced substantially

Conclusion

The property in its form as a public house was marketed in an attempt to retain its commercial use, but to no positive outcome. Further to such attempts over the last 2 to 3 years it was sold as a vacant property to the current owners. It is therefore considered non-viable as a business and suitable for conversion to residential in order to retain and improve a large and prominent building within the village. Residential use would be both more practical and sustainable, especially considering the current financial decline in general and within the hospitality sector – continued attempts at commercial use would not be considered viable.

Marketing:

From Sidney Phillips:

Sidney Phillips were instructed on 19 October 2022 to market the leasehold interest of the property to the open market on a nil premium basis, with rental offers invited for a new free-of-tie lease.

Following a prolonged period of marketing and no offers received, Sidney Phillips were on 5 June 2024 instructed to offer to the market the freehold interest of the property. Please note that there was no cessation of marketing during the transfer from offering the leasehold opportunity to the freehold.

At the time of instruction, the property was opening and trading on short-term Tenancy At Will agreements, until closure of the business in August 2025. **During this time there were two separate Tenants, both of whom were running at a loss.**

Commencing on the date of instruction, Sidney Phillips undertook a full marketing campaign with local, regional and national exposure, in order to fully expose the opportunity to the market, which included:

- Entrance onto Sidney Phillips website.
- Regular E-marketing campaigns sent out to registered buyers on our database.
- Sales details sent by post and email following direct enquiries.