WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Adur & Worthing Councils FAO: Jo Morin
FROM:	WSCC – Highways Authority
DATE:	26 September 2024
LOCATION:	The Atrium 3 The Causeway Worthing West Sussex
SUBJECT:	NOTICE/0012/24 Application for prior approval for change of use from offices (Use Class E(g)(i)) to 48 no. residential units (C3) comprising 15 no. 1 bed 1 person, 28 no. 1 bed 2 person and 5 no. two bedroom 3 person flats.
DATE OF SITE VISIT:	n/a
RECOMMENDATION:	No Objection

West Sussex County Council (WSCC), in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on the above prior notification application (NOTICE/0012/24), The application is supported by way of a Transport Statement from 2020 and an updated Transport Statement letter. The prior notification application is for change of use from offices (Use Class E(g)(i)) to 48 no. residential units (C3) comprising 15 no. 1 bed 1 person, 28 no. 1 bed 2 person and 5 no. two bedroom 3 person flats. The site was subject to a similar prior notification application (NOTICE/0007/20) in 2020 for which no highway objection was raised.

Permitted Development

Permitted Development Under the General Permitted Development Order, change of use from offices to residential is permitted subject to prior approval from the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The prior approval process requires demonstration from the applicant that the development will not cause adverse impact in contamination, flooding risk and transport and highways terms. The LHA will therefore provide comments in respect to the highways and transport impacts of the development.

The application is supported by technical plans, Planning Statement and Transport Statement (TS). The LHA would not raise a highway safety or capacity reason to resist the application, subject to following comments and advised conditions.

Local Road Network

Local Road Network The site is accessed from The Causeway, an unclassified public road subject to 30mph speed restriction. The carriageway ranges from 9-11m in width and features on-street parking on both sides. A short distance to the south of the site is Durrington-on-Sea Train Station, which can be reached by street lit footway present either side of the carriageway. To the north of the site The Causeway joins with the 'C' classified The Strand, in proximity to Strand Parade Roundabout. The

nearby road network features a range of residential, offices and commercial properties including Field Place Parade and Strand Parade to the north which provide shopping and amenities/ services.

There appears to be a limited vehicular access along southern boundary of building via crossover to Chesterfield Road (at its junction with The Causeway). This appears to lead to bin storage area and it is presumed that these arrangements will be retained as part of the proposals to wheel bins to the roadside, where servicing will take place as per existing arrangements.

The LHA have reviewed the data supplied to WSCC by Sussex Police over a period of the last five years. There has been 2 x recorded injury accidents approximately 50 metres to the north of the site, on The Causeway. However, from an inspection of accident data, it is evident that this was not due to any defect with nearby road layout.

Car Parking

A nil car parking provision is proposed for the new development. Under the WSCC Car Parking Standards, 45 x car parking spaces may be provided for the proposal. Given the accessibility of the site by transport modes other than the private car, a car-free development is considered acceptable.

Nevertheless, a parking stress survey was carried out on the surrounding road network (within 200m) to determine whether the development would affect capacity of nearby on-street parking. Table 4.1 summarises the parking survey results and indicates that within the survey area approximately 38% of parking spaces were available overnight (with the survey being carried out on two early morning weekdays to take in to account highest level of residential parking demand). This equated to a count of 69/70 spaces available out of the 180-space capacity nearby on-street. It is therefore considered that sufficient capacity nearby on-street is available for residents of the proposed scheme. Furthermore, there are parking restrictions within the vicinity, including junction protection markings at nearby junctions, prohibiting vehicles from parking in places that would be detriment to highway safety. We would not consider that highway safety would be detrimentally affected through the proposed nil car parking provision. The LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts of this development on on-street car parking from an amenity point of view.

Trip Generation

Besides the fact that the site will not provide any dedicated off-street parking, a trip generation assessment has nonetheless been carried out as some residents may choose to park nearby on-street and thus some vehicular trips could be generated by the development.

TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer Systems) database has been interrogated to determine the existing number of person trips that could have been generated by the permitted office use. Using suitable parameters in TRICS it was found that 178 person trips in the AM and 154 in the PM peak could have been generated for 4,680sqm office floor space. Section 5.4 of the TS goes on to determine how many trips could have been made by different transport modes by applying 'Method of Travel to Work' data for the area from 2011 census data. Table 5.2 indicates that 27% of residents within the area travelled to work by sustainable transport modes (bus, train, by foot or bicycle) and 59% travelled by private car. On this basis, the existing office use could have resulted in 105 vehicle movements in the AM and 90 movements in the PM peak, although it is noted that there does not appear to be any dedicated off-street parking currently for the office use.

An assessment of the anticipated trip rates because of the change of use was also carried out using suitable residential site parameters from TRICS. It was found that a development of 48 x units could see 28 person trips in the AM and 31 in the PM peak. Using the previously mentioned census data, many trips are anticipated to be by sustainable transport modes. Table 5.4 accounts for the car free nature of the development stating that zero trips to/ from the site will be by car. However, there is a possibility that residents may park nearby on street and thus the stated decrease of trips may not be wholly accurate. Nevertheless, the LHA have carried out an inhouse assessment using TRICS and anticipated vehicle trips only. The results are broadly comparable, and the LHA does not consider that the development would result in a significant increase in vehicular trips to/ from and in vicinity of the site. Consequently, no detrimental impact to the capacity of the nearby road network is anticipated because of the change of use.

Accessibility

The TS sets out accessibility of the site in terms of proximity to local facilities, amenities, and public transport options. It is also considered that a Travel Plan Statement could be secured to encourage residents of the scheme to uptake sustainable transport modes. Whilst it is acknowledged that no off-street parking is to be provided, this is considered an existing situation and to reduce additional on-street parking in the vicinity information and incentives in the form of a Residents Welcome Pack could be provided, details of which to be secured via condition.

Street lit footway flanks both sides of The Causeway and provides a route for pedestrians to nearby amenities to the north of the site include grocery retail, pharmacy, and foot outlets. There are pedestrian refuge islands and tactile paving to the north to assist those crossing The Strand to access further amenities such as the Junior School to the northwest.

The mean average distance for a walking journey for commuters is approximately 1km with a maximum walking distance of 2km as set out within section 3.30 of The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport - Providing for Pedestrian Journeys on Foot (1999). Durrington-on-Sea Train Station is a short distance (approximately 70m) to the south of the site and provides frequent services to various destinations such as Littlehampton, Worthing, Shoreham, Haywards Heath, Southampton, Brighton, and London Victoria with a frequency of 30-60 minutes. The nearest bus stops are approximately 140-170m to the north of the site from either side of The Strand. These provide further opportunity for public transport usage with services to destinations such as Shoreham, Worthing, and Littlehampton.

The surrounding roads are considered suitable for experienced cyclists and the ground floor plan indicates that bicycle parking will be provided for residents within the building. This should meet WSCC guidance whereby 1 and 2-bedroom flats should be provided with 0.5 space per unit in a communal facility. Details of bicycle storage facilities can be secured via condition.

In summary, the proposal is served via sustainable transport within the average walking distances set out in Providing for Pedestrian Journeys on Foot. A wide range of public transport, supermarket, leisure, education, and medical facilities are within 2km walking distance and further amenities are within 5km cycling distance.

Construction

Whilst the prior approval will not involve significant external changes, some level of construction including alterations to internal walls, is expected. Matters relating to access during the construction of the proposed would need to be agreed prior to any works commencing. Vehicular access to the site is possible only from The Causeway/Chesterfield Road. A comprehensive construction management plan should be submitted. This should set out the controls to be implemented throughout the construction project to ensure that safety of users of the public highway, as well as its operation, is not detrimentally affected. The construction management plan should amongst other things set out how deliveries are to be managed along the nearby road network considering the presence of other vulnerable road users and on-street parking zones.

Conclusion

The application is in a very sustainable location with good public transport links. Although the parking beat surveys were carried out towards the end of 2019, they seem to have incorporated the parking demand from the committed development which were operations from 2018 and 2019. WSCC, from experience analysing several previous applications, are convinced that offices generate far more vehicular trips than residential. Therefore, there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) do 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; therefore, is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraphs 110 -113, as revised 20th July 2021. Therefore, there are no transport grounds to resist this proposal.

If the Local Planning Authority (LPA) mind to approve the application, the following conditions should be applied:

CONDITIONS

Cycle Parking

No part of the new development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

Construction Plant and Materials

No development shall be commenced until such time as plans and details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing the site set up during construction. This shall include details for all temporary contractors' buildings, plant and stacks of materials, provision for the temporary parking of contractor's vehicles and the loading and unloading of vehicles associated with the implementation of this development. Such provision once approved and implemented shall be retained throughout the period of construction. Reason: To avoid undue congestion of the site and consequent obstruction to access.

Travel Plan Statement (to be approved)

No part of the development shall be first occupied until such time as a Travel Plan Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan Statement shall

be completed in accordance with the latest guidance and good practice documentation as published by the Department for Transport or as advised by the Highway Authority.

Reason: To encourage and promote sustainable transport.

INFORMATIVE

The applicant is advised that the erection of temporary directional signage should be agreed with the Local Traffic Engineer prior to any signage being installed. The applicant should be aware that a charge will be applied for this service. The applicant is advised of the requirement to enter early discussions with and obtain the necessary licenses from the Highway Authority to cover any temporary construction related works that will obstruct or affect the normal operation of the public highway prior to any works commencing. These temporary works may include the placing of skips or other materials within the highway, the temporary closure of on-street parking bays, the imposition of temporary parking restrictions requiring a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order, the erection of hoarding or scaffolding within the limits of the highway, the provision of cranes over-sailing the highway.

Roopa Bilichodmath
West Sussex County Council – Planning Services