Cllr Alden
les.alden@adur.gov.uk

The Planning Practice
18 Tillstone Street
Brighton
BN2 0BD

07799668899
af@theppltd.com

14 December 2018

Dear Cllr Alden,

AWDM/0756/18 - Land East Of 24 to 30 Manor Close, Gardener Street, Portslade, BN41 1SX
Proposed 4no. three bedroom two storey detached dwellings including new access from Gardener Street and alterations to public footpath (Former Manor Hall Nursery)

Further to a review of the detailed consideration and discussion, and printed minutes in relation to the above application at the recent Planning Committee of 3 December 2018 (which was deferred until the next Planning Committee scheduled for 7 January 2019 so that Committee members could make a site visit) we felt it would be helpful to write and provide further clarity to some of the queries which were raised during the open discussion.

The applicant has taken a highly collaborative approach to the redevelopment of the site with the Local Planning Authority. We have made use of the formal pre-application service provided by the Council and responded to concerns raised by both the Planning Officer and local residents, through the submission of amended plans and the provision of additional details and information when required.

We believe that the current proposal is well considered and provides the ability to unlock a previously developed brownfield site for residential accommodation. The LPA has previously considered that site has the potential for housing, however previous land owners were unable to provide a suitable access.

The main areas of discussion between Members of the Committee at the meeting related to highways considerations, potential impact upon neighbouring amenity, and ecological concerns.

Highways

As noted by Members of the Planning Committee a previous application for residential development on the site was refused. One of the grounds for refusal related to the provision of substandard vehicular access to the site. This situation is completely transformed since the current applicant is in the unique position of owning 57 Gardener Street, and associated land adjacent to the application site.

Having control of this land allows, through the use of part of the frontage of 57 Gardner Street, for the creation of a suitably designed vehicular access to the site. The accompanying Transport Report submitted in support of the application, and subsequent proviso of additional details confirms that the proposed access is acceptable in design terms and ensures that pedestrian safety is not compromised.

Given the location of the site, crossing three administerial boundaries, the application has been independently assessed by each of the separate Highways Authorities. Following the provision of further details no objection has been raised by any of the Authorities' to the proposed access and footpath reconfiguration. The Highways Authorities have retained control over the final detailed design requiring the provision of full details for their approval as secured by proposed Condition 8 within the officer's report.

The current scheme proposes the provision of two parking spaces per residential unit, along with cycle parking facilities. This is a higher provision than any other home in the area, and seeks to ensure that there are no impacts upon existing on-street parking conditions.

Further concern was raised relating to the potential for existing on-street parking conditions to restrict access to the site by both refuse and emergency vehicles. The proposed layout including turning head has been subject to swept path analysis confirming that Refuse vehicles, which have a larger kerb to kerb turning radius than fire engines, can access and egress the site in a forward gear. This is a significant improvement upon existing highway conditions and safety as this would not currently be possible.

In the event that any further concerns are raised regarding access to the site by the fire service, in such circumstances current Buildings Regulations requires each residential property to be fitted with an appropriate fire suppression system.

We think that it is important to highlight that the re-profiling of land required to provide a compliant vehicular access, along with the proposed new footpath across the frontage of 57 Gardener Street has the additional benefit of improving pedestrian links and access to the existing public right of way. At present residents of Gardener Street and the surrounding area are only able to access the public right of way by the use of the existing steps. The provision of a ramped access in lieu of the steps allows improved access for members of the public with restricted mobility, parents with infants, and elderly residents.

Neighbouring amenity

The site layout has been designed cognisant of the requirements detailed within supplementary planning guidance' Space around new dwellings and flats'. The officer's report confirms that the required garden depths and subsequent separation distances between buildings are in accordance with the guidance.

There is a single separation distance which is marginally below the required distance of 29m, between facing elevations of a 3-storey building and a 2-storey building. The scheme has been designed with the proposed elevations set at an oblique angle to existing properties. This ensures that none of the proposed windows are positioned directly in line with existing windows of the properties fronting onto Manor Hall Road. The oblique angle of the facing elevations further reduces any potential opportunity for inter-looking to occur between respective occupiers.

Some Members of the Committee were concerned about the potential impact on neighbouring amenity resulting from the future use of householder Permitted Development rights. Condition 15 as proposed will remove general permitted rights which residential dwellings ordinarily benefit from. Condition 16 also seeks to protect neighbouring amenity by ensuring that no additional windows are inserted into the West elevation of plot 4. The removal of these PD rights therefore requires a planning application to be submitted for any future alterations and extensions to the properties. These applications would then be subject to standard procedure whereby the impact on neighbouring amenity will be assessed accordingly.

Ecology

The Application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and a Phase 2 Reptiles Survey. The report confirms the presence of slow worms at the site. Mitigation for which is also detailed within the Survey, the final details which have been secured through the proposed imposition of Conditions 3 & 4. The proposed conditions also require the submission of a scheme to enhance biodiversity at the site.

We trust that this note has provided a greater understanding and further clarity to the proposal, and the unique opportunity which exists to open up this previously landlocked site providing 4no additional family dwellings within Adur & Worthing.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Foster BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI
The Planning Practice ltd

Cc Peter Barnett AWDC