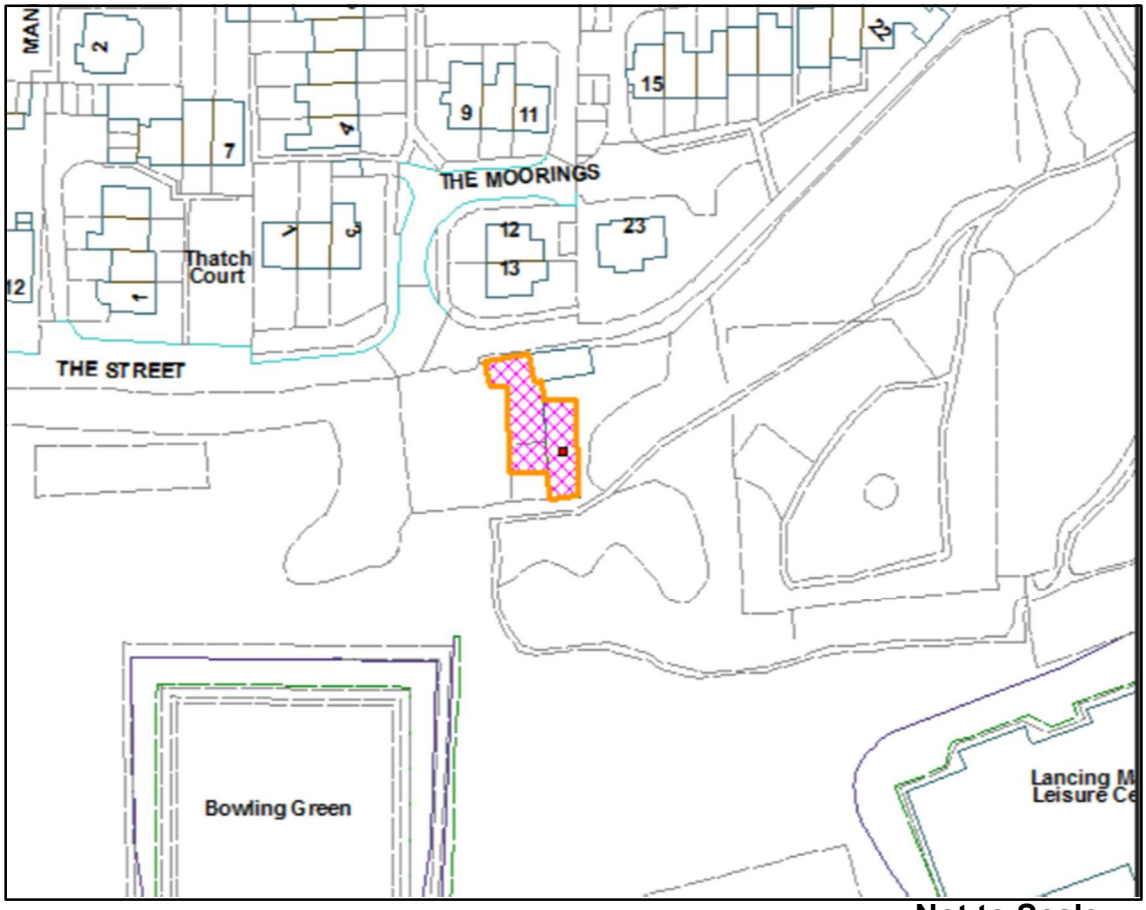
Application Number:	**AWDM/0941/23**	**Recommendation - APPROVE**
Site:	**1 The Street, Lancing**	
Proposal:	**Change of use from groundsman's shed to workshop with storage area and quiet room for social, educational and recreational activities. Application to vary condition 2 of approved AWDM/0630/23 to allow working outside the building**	
Applicant:	Men In Sheds Lancing And Sompting	Ward: Manor
Agent:	Mr Frank King	
Case Officer:	Peter Barnett	



Not to Scale

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Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a group of buildings at the north end of Manor Park which are owned by the District Council and were previously used for storage of grounds maintenance equipment. There is a hardsurfaced area to the west, accessed from The Street, which is used informally for parking. The site currently lies to the east of the North Lancing Conservation Area but is not within it. Members will be aware, however, that there are plans to extend the Conservation Area boundary to include the site and part of the park to the west. There are residential dwellings directly to the north at The Moorings.

Permission was granted in 2019 to use the buildings (the Barn and The Garage) in connection with a community group known as "Men In Sheds" which provides a space for residents to come together to meet up and carry out woodworking with the aim of challenging isolation and improving wellbeing. The use began on the site in August 2021. A subsequent application in 2021 expanded the use into the Groundsman's Building.

The buildings are a community resource where locals come in and learn how to use tools and undertake DIY projects. The group makes items such as planters, bird boxes, bug houses, bird feeders, bird tables, owl and bat boxes, etc. They also offer a free repair service to residents for items such as benches, seats, tables, chairs, etc. Some items are refurbished and put back into community use at local nursing homes, for example.

Planning permission was granted by Members at the Planning Committee in July for a variation of the hours of opening to allow the buildings to be used from 7.30am-4pm Monday-Friday and 8am -4pm Saturday, to enable preparation/set up in advance of use of building by members from 8.30am plus retention of an outside toilet unit (AWDM/0630/23).

This application seeks to vary Condition 2 of that permission to allow for outside working. Condition 2 currently reads:

"No external working or storage shall take place anywhere on the site to which this permission relates and all working shall be confined to within the buildings.
Reason: In the interests of amenity having regard to policy 15 of the Adur Local Plan."

The applicants wish to vary the condition to allow for the painting and staining of wood outside. The application form explains that it is beneficial for health reasons to be able to carry out these activities in the fresh air. No use of power tools will take place outside and the work will be confined to the area that they lease from the Council and which is contained within a fenced off area.

Relevant Planning History

AWDM/1842/19 Regulation 4 application for Change of Use of 'The Barn' currently used for Council storage to a workshop and 'The Garage' to ancillary storage area - approved

AWDM/1877/21 Change of use from groundsman's shed to workshop with storage

area and quiet room for social, educational and recreational activities - approved.

AWDM/0630/23 Change of use from groundsman's shed to workshop with storage area and quiet room for social, educational and recreational activities. Application to vary condition 4 (hours of opening) of approved AWDM/1877/21 to allow building to be used from 7.30am-4pm Monday-Friday and 8am -4pm Saturday, to enable preparation/set up in advance of use of building by members from 8.30am plus retention of outside toilet unit - approved

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The proposed variation of Condition 2 only relates to the use of outside space within the site for working, and is not anticipated to have an impact on highway safety. 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, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal

Lancing Parish Council: Support the application

Adur & Worthing Councils: Public Health: No objection

Sussex Police: No concerns from a crime prevention viewpoint

Representations

8 objections received from the occupiers of 11, 18 The Moorings, 2 Bay Tree Cottages, Lamorna Cottage, 17, 18, 20 The Street

- Not acceptable to have spray painting close to where park users walk past
- Health hazard
- The use is encroaching on the yard and is more suitable on an industrial estate
- The yard is unsightly
- Applicants are unlawfully restricting the use of the car park by the public
- No further changes or breaches to the original conditions should be allowed
- Noise pollution

The applicant has responded to the objections in a series of emails, making the following points:

- All activities take place on land that we lease and does not affect use of car park
- Intention is to put top soil layer around felt mat and plant wildflowers
- Felt mat is where we park our vehicle and is a non-permanent solution. It also helps to make uneven ground safer to walk on
- 90% of paint and stains used is water-based and non-toxic
- It is beneficial for mental health to be working outside
- There is no spray painting outside

- Fencing that has been erected was put up by the Parks Department

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 15, 33, 34
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

Relevant Legislation

The Committee may grant planning permission for development carried out before the date of the application in accordance with Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Save that the development will have already commenced, this is a conventional planning application, and the Committee should consider the planning circumstances existing at the time of the decision in accordance with:

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Regard shall be given to relevant development plan policies, any relevant local finance considerations, and other material considerations; and

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the decision to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning Assessment

Principle

The principle of development has been established by the previous permission. Leasing public land for commercial enterprise is an accepted practice for the Council's Parks and in this case redundant buildings are being re-used for community purposes.

The use of the land and the provision of any structures on the site are regulated by the Council's Parks and Estates teams, and authorisation has been given to the siting of the toilet, the various miscellaneous items between the buildings and the painting of items outside.

This application must consider the amenity impacts of the development and assess whether it adversely affects the public's enjoyment of the Park and the visual amenities of the locality.

Visual amenity

There are a number of small structures within the fenced off area between the buildings which is also used as a social space and for painting/staining. No activities take place outside of this area. The introduction of painting and staining outside is a relatively low key activity which is not considered to cause visual harm.

Residential amenity

The painting of wooden products outside of the building will not cause noise disturbance. No power tools are to be used and no spray painting takes place outside of the buildings. There have been complaints of smells but the painting is done in the open air where any limited odours will quickly dissipate and there is no objection from the Council's Environmental Health Officers.

It should be noted that the buildings are owned by the Council and they have control of the use on the site. Should any activity not comply with the terms of the lease, the necessary action can be taken.

Accessibility and parking

There is an area within the compound that is used as an informal car park and which continues to be available to the applicants and park users alike.The fenced off area where the painting takes place does not affect the space within the remainder of the compound for the parking of vehicles. It should be noted that the compound is not a public car park and that any parking that takes place is at the Council's discretion.

Recommendation

Approve

Subject to conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. No external working (other than hand painting and staining of wooden products) or storage shall take place anywhere on the site to which this permission relates and all working shall be confined to within the buildings.
3. The buildings shall not be used except between the hours of 7.30am-4pm Monday-Friday and 8am-4pm on Saturdays. There shall be no use of machinery or dispatch of deliveries at the premises except between the hours of 8.45 am and 4.00 pm on Mondays to Saturdays inclusive.
   The buildings shall not be used at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.
4. The premises shall be used as a workshop Class E(g) (iii), for storage (Class B8) and as a meeting place for the local community (Class F2(b)) as set out in the application and for no other purpose within Class E, F or B8 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or in any provision equivalent to that class in any Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).
5. There shall be no external alterations to the buildings without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.
6. No retail sales shall take place from the buildings at any time.
7. The toilet building shall be permanently removed from the site on cessation of the current use of the buildings as workshop and meeting place for the local community

Informative: The applicant is reminded that there should be no external storage anywhere on the site and all materials should be confined to within the buildings.