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Save the environment - think before you print.

From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 July 2021 19:00

To: Michael Eastham <Michael.Eastham@arun.gov.uk>

Subject: A/110/21/PL

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BMW House Chandlers Garage Ltd Water Lane Angmering BN16 4EH

Erection of retirement apartment with 20 No. 1 Bed flats & 13 No.2 Bed flats with communal facilities & car parking, erection of a retail store with car parking & associated highway works. This

application affect the character & appearance of the Angmering Conservation area, affects the setting of listed buildings and is in CIL Zone 2 (Zero Rated) as other development.

Part of the application site is located within the Angmering Conservation Area and is immediately adjacent to a grade II Listed Building. There are also a number of other Listed Buildings within close proximity of the site. For instance, the Lamb Public House and the war memorial. There are also a number of locally listed buildings to the south of the site (around the High Street and The Square).

The Conservation Area is the historic core of the village and consists of three different areas of townscape. These are: The Square, the approach from Arundel Road and The High Street. The Square is situated at the centre of the village and contains most of the village's shops and commercial premises, and the village War Memorial. It is an attractive irregular space with a pleasant sense of enclosure. Arundel Road leads from the A27 and buildings of flint and brick, most notably the old school (now the library), frame a narrow entrance to The Square. The High Street is almost entirely residential and whereas Arundel Road is narrow and straight, the High Street is wider but with a significant gentle curve which invites exploration of the fine buildings distributed along the road. The conservation area contains a number of other listed and locally listed buildings which form an attractive group, in the historic core of the village.

The closest listed building to the application site is a property called 'Eachways'. Eachways is an early C19, two storey detached property. Faced with square knapped flints with long and short brick quoins and windows surrounds. The roof is tiled. The sliding sash windows retain their glazing bars. It is of aesthetic significance.

The Lamb is an C18 Grade II Listed public House. The building is two storeys and attic, which as two dormers. It is faced with roughcast render and has a modillion eaves cornice. Mansarded slate roof. Doorway up four steps with iron handrail having rectangular fanlight and flat hood on brackets.

The existing site

The proposed site is situated in the centre of Angmering Village and was previously used as showrooms, workshops, offices and ancillary accommodation by a car dealership who have relocated elsewhere within the district.

The site is bordered by two roads: Water Lane and High Street. It is irregularly shaped. In general, the whole site is reasonably level, having extensive retaining wall boundaries to the eastern and southern boundaries which will be fully exposed once the site is cleared of the existing structures. This is compared to the high street which rises in a roughly easterly direction from the square.

The Water Lane frontage is open to the road and footpath with two existing access points. At present this frontage is made up of the existing single storey showroom buildings (with two storey building behind) and covered car sales areas with views through to the development land beyond as well as the rears of the stepped housing of Cumberland Crescent. The existing development/site does not provide a good gateway into the conservation area or the setting of the listed buildings.

The High Street frontage is more contained, being set back behind a mix of existing hedging, trees, walls and fences with on-street parking. There are small sections with exposed access into open parking, workshop and car storage areas, with extended views towards the rears of the stepped housing along Cumberland Crescent. There is potential to enhance this part of the street-scene.

The Proposed Development

The proposed development is for retirement living apartments and a retail store. The proposed development will comprise a two-storey apartment block, approximately H-shaped in plan, with a commercial retail unit which extends north-east in a short block along the Water Lane frontage of the site. This building which appears to be designed to accommodate a large portion of the site.

The NPPF (para 206) states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. It is not clear whether certain elements of the development achieve this aim at present.

The site is visible from both within the conservation area as well as from outside and looking into it (along Water Lane). The later also affording views of the two listed buildings. The removal of the existing buildings is a positive element of the scheme, as they detract from the various assets, being of an inappropriate design and state of repair.

The proposed building covers a large area and would appear to be the largest single building in the local area. The proposed High Street block would sit forward of Eachways, with a higher ridge height. Such a large building would be visible on approaching the conservation area, in the settings on the listed buildings (as indicated in the building massing studies provided as part of the Design and Access Statement). It also appears that the retail element of the building (the northern elevation) would be taller than Eachways and could potentially appear in its setting when viewed from the square/Water Lane – this is in contrast with the existing single storey development. This is out of character and will adversely affect the setting of Eachways.

The High Street is characterised by a variety of building age, style and size. At the western end of the road, and close to the site, the scale diminishes, with a tighter knit and more intimate streetscape. The western element of the new building (i.e. the rendered block which forms the west elevation) is too long and covers a large area. It would appear to be at least two times the ground floor area of Eachways.

At present all of the buildings in the square front on to it, including the listed buildings and the modern house to be demolished as part of the proposal. The layout of the proposed scheme indicates that a number of apartments on the western elevation will all back on to the road/square. This would essentially present the rear of the building onto the public domain, which is out of character. The elevation itself is fairly standard and reads as a block of apartments, as opposed to a terrace of individual homes (a feature of the many buildings which are present on the square and high street. This is disappointing and below the quality expected for such a location.

The proposed retail element seems to be acceptable in that an attempt has been made to divide the elevation up so that it 'reads' as a number of smaller buildings, and there are no large expanses of glass and signage. However, the treatment of this space needs carefully considered in order to ensure that appropriate signage and window treatments are used (for example I would not want to see large areas of modern vinyl covering the glazing).

I note that the Design and Access Statement identifies a pallet of materials including Concrete Ridge Tiles, UPVC Fascia & Soffit, UPVC Window & Doors (Grey) and UPVC Rainwater Goods. Such materials are not appropriate for a conservation area (or its setting) or the setting of listed buildings. It is suggested that at least those elements of the building visible from the conservation area/its setting and the setting of the listed buildings should be of an appropriate material, design, operation and colour (i.e. traditional). Additionally, details such as the location of windows and doors in their respective openings should also be considered so as to not be flush to the elevation.

Likewise, I am not supportive of the proposal to have grey windows and doors, especially as this does not appear to be traditionally found in the local area.

The use of flint in the elevations may be acceptable, but would have to be of a high quality so as to reflect that found in the local area and not detract from the existing high quality examples. Sample panels and details of the materials to be used would be required if you are minded to approve the application.

Conclusion

At present, I am of the opinion that whilst there are some positive elements to the proposal, there are also some problematical ones which will lead to harm to the historic environment. It must be remembered that any harm to the historic environment is harm, which in this case could be described as 'less than substantial harm' in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF (2021). As such, you will also need to consider the public benefits that the development may achieve as part of your assessment of the application, along with the contents of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

Martyn White

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Please note: I work on Conservation for half of the working Week (all day Monday and Friday and Tuesday Afternoons)

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