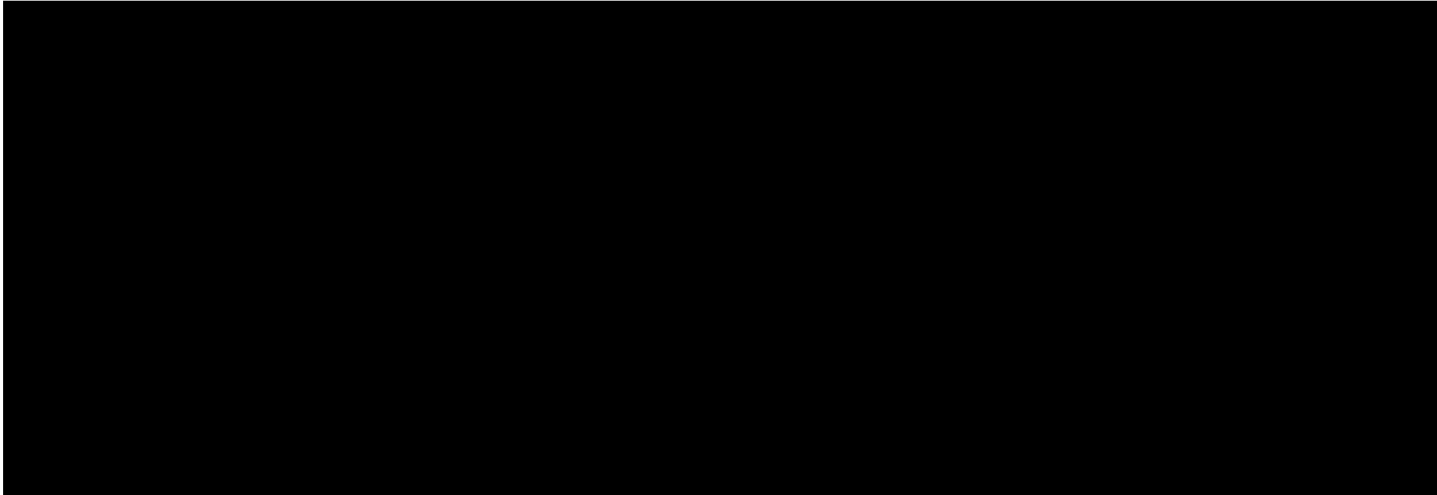



From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 December 2020 17:39
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Simon Davis <Simon.Davis@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: BR/244/20/PL

BR/244/20/PL

The Beach Hotel, former Mud Club Waterloo Square Bognor Regis PO21 1SU

Redevelopment into 11 No. 2 bed apartments & 2 No. commercial units (A1 Retail or A3 Restaurant/Cafe) (resubmission following BR/282/19/PL

The property is located within The Steyne and Waterloo Square Conservation Area. A description of the conservation areas is provided in a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note, which is not repeated here. However, the contents of that description should also be taken into consideration as part of the determination of this application.

There are several listed and locally listed buildings in the immediate and wider area which contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

The Site and its Surroundings

The site fronts on to roads on three sides: the western side on to Waterloo Square, the southern on to The Esplanade, and the eastern on to Norfolk Street. It is interesting to note that whilst a larger area of land is within the control of the applicant, it would appear that only approximately half of it is subject to this application. This is unfortunate as it will leave a vacant site within the conservation area.

Waterloo Square consists of a large open space which was intended to protect views from Richard Hotham's Fitzleet House. Whilst this particular property has been demolished, the open space remains an important reminder of it. It also forms an important area of open space within the urban area.

Typical of seaside resorts, this open central space is flanked by nearly continuous, street fronted development. This creates a visible building line which is present to both sides of the square which informs a uniform character to the area. Whilst there is a variety in the age and style of the buildings, they are modest in scale being mostly 2/3 storeys high. There is also continuity with the majority of the older buildings being rendered and painted.

Remnants from the early development of the Square exist in Nos. 7 – 17 Waterloo Square, they are reminders of a development of a fine, formal group of buildings in a Regency style dating from 1815 - 1820. The square sits at a right angle to the esplanade road and is linked to the seafront. It is visible from the Esplanade and forms a focal point when traveling along it.

Other buildings of note include the pier, which is a grade II Listed Building. It is built of iron posts with wooden decking and cast-iron railings. Roughcast pavilions are present at shore end with roofs of slate, roofing felt, and felt tiles. There is an arcade facing the promenade which is of two storeys with hipped roof. On the first floor is a central round headed pediment with round headed window flanked by ornate pilasters with swags. This application site can be viewed in the context of the pier when seen from the esplanade. The pier is considered to be of historic and communal significance.

Whilst there has been some modern development, it generally respects the established character of the area. The only building in this side of the square which is contrast to the established character is the Methodist church. This building is a bricked structure which somewhat stands out and can be easily identified as a place of worship.

Due to the location of the square adjacent to the seafront, and the presence of the pier and the 'crazy golf', the local area becomes one that has a tourist function where there is a continuous presence of people during the summer months.

Norfolk Street is typical of the several small service streets or roads in the area. Its small scale contrasts with the large, formal space of the main square. Development here is mostly small scale, two storied properties which front on to the carriageway. The street itself is narrow with buildings at the northern end fronting directly onto the pavement.

The previous development

It is worth noting some details of the previous buildings on this application site, as it helps to provide some context. The application site consisted of the former mud club building, which has now been demolished. This building was a mixture of 2 and 4 floors and was of a design that meant that it complimented the established mix of styles in the conservation area. Whilst the loss of the building is unfortunate, and has harmed the conservation area, it is considered that there is now the opportunity for new development to enhance it so that something positive can be achieved. Due to the complex nature of the site, it is considered that any proposals require careful consideration, whilst taking into account the local historic context.

The Current Proposed Development

As the site is highly visible in a strategic location which forms a gateway to Waterloo Square and what is described as 'The Old Town', a considered approach is required to ensure that any new

development is in keeping with the conservation area (especially this part), and does no harm in accordance with the relevant legislation. Further, it should not harm the nearby heritage assets.

It is positive to note that the proposal maintains the existing building line along Waterloo Square and the Esplanade. Further the retention of a ground floor retail/commercial element around the junction with the esplanade can be supported as it will maintain the previous use of part of the site and encourage visitors into this part of the town.

The current scheme is also considered to reflect a number of elements found within the conservation area such as the use of bay windows and the design of the balconies. Furthermore, the corner of the western/southern elevations is such that it could form a focal point on The Esplanade, as the previous building did. This is a definite positive feature, especially the dome which is reflective of both another building in the town, and a former building which was located close by. The success of such a scheme will depend upon the materials, colours and details chosen. If minded to approve the application, please condition details of all materials, windows/doors (including details of their positions within the openings), external colours and details of cornices and parapets etc.

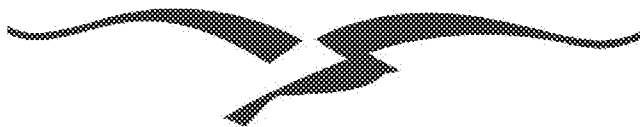
The new building is also now closer in height to the neighbouring buildings, but still remains between one and two stories higher than those buildings in the conservation area. Development of this height would be contrary to the established character, but as previously mentioned would form a focal point in this specific location, and would therefore, on balance, be acceptable. However, it should be noted that this should not form a precedent for elsewhere in the conservation area if the application is approved.

It is not clear why only part of the site is being considered for development at this time, and this proposal should help to inform the development of that site. It is hoped that the vacant site will also be developed at the same time.

Conclusion

Whilst the application is an improvement on previous versions, there is some concern regarding the height of the proposed building. However, on balance, the application is considered to not cause harm to the significance of the heritage assets or their setting. As a consequence, it should be determined in accordance with the relevant policies within the Development Plan, along with these comments. You will also need to take into account the contents of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

Martyn White
Principal Conservation Officer,
Planning Services



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

T: 01903 737717

E: Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk or Conservation.officer@arun.gov.uk

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF
www.arun.gov.uk

Sign up to our newsletter [here](#)



