

**APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS (APPEARANCE AND LANDSCAPING)
FOLLOWING OUTLINE PERMISSION (EG/9/07) FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF
EXISTING OFFICE BUILDING AND BUILDERS YARD WITH 6 NO. APARTMENTS
TOGETHER WITH PARKING**

COMMERCIAL HOUSE, FONTWELL AVENUE, EASTERGATE

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Introduction

The application site is approximately 0.064 hectares in extent and currently comprises a two-storey building used for office purposes in connection with the applicant's business, being a building contractor.

The land to the south and east of the offices is used for the storage of builders' materials and for the parking of both commercial vehicles and vehicles used by staff employed at the premises.

Outline planning permission was granted in February 2008 for the redevelopment of this existing building and yard area with 6 no. apartments together with parking. The layout and scale of the proposed building along with the means of access were approved under that application. This application seeks approval for the reserved matters which relate to the appearance and landscaping of the proposed development.

Policy Background

This application should be considered against National Planning Guidance as contained within PPS 1 and PPS 3 together with Local Plan Policy GEN7.

Insofar as National Guidance is concerned both PPS1 and PPS3 advocate the re-use of previously developed land for housing purposes, especially where established character will not be compromised by any proposal.

The principal objective is to seek efficient and effective use of land within the urban areas and although the application site lies outside of any defined Built Up Area boundary the guidance does not preclude appropriate redevelopment, especially as stated where this comprises previously developed land. The application site is currently used for office and builders yard purposes and therefore comprises previously developed land which, under the outline application, has been considered suitable for residential redevelopment. Such residential development will enhance the character of the street scene and be more compatible with existing residential development in the locality.

Policy GEN 7 of the Arun District Local Plan deals with the criteria which new proposals should be assessed against and Criterion1 requires that development should seek minimum densities of 30 dwelling per hectare which the application proposal accords with.

Criterion 2 requires that development demonstrates and responds positively to the identified characteristics of the site and enhances local distinctiveness.

The characteristics of the site are wholly residential and therefore redevelopment for residential purposes will be in character with the area and in our view appropriate.

Attached to the outline planning application was an indicative elevation demonstrating the form of the proposed development and it was considered by officers in the committee report that this would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area. This application proposes a building of the same proportions and therefore will respect local distinctiveness and the characteristics of surrounding development.

Insofar as sustainability is concerned, the site, although outside the built up area, is located on a bus route and is surrounded by existing residential development. Eastergate itself is within walking distance of the site whereby there is a full range of services and local retail units. Eastergate Community College and other educational facilities are also within walking distance of the premises.

Criterion 4 requires that a proposal does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on adjoining occupiers of land or property and the proposed siting of the building acknowledges the protection of existing residential amenity and privacy and taking into account the relationship and configuration of adjoining development and the proposed apartments it is not considered that any undue overlooking or loss of amenity will result. This was acknowledged in the committee report by officers in respect of the indicative drawings which remain largely unaltered.

Taking into account the application site being situated in a wholly residential area there will result no acceptable adverse impacts from adjoining land uses or property.

The application site does not comprise a significant open or wooded area and therefore is not at discord with the requirements of Criterion 6.

Criteria 7 and 8 relate to pedestrian access and vehicle parking and as will be noted from the submitted plans access for pedestrians is available from the site direct to the adjoining public footpath and access and parking arrangements accord with Local Plan Standards. Furthermore, the access and parking arrangements remain as approved under the outline planning application.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal responds positively to local context and accords with the criteria attendant to Policy GEN7.

Design Principles

To the north of the application site are existing semi-detached dwellings, known as Woodland Villas, and these properties are separated from the site by a public footpath which runs in an east-west direction.

To the south of the application site is a property known as Hunters Chase, which has planning permission for change of use to holiday accommodation and the development of part of the garden for a single detached dwelling house.

To the east of the application site is a recently constructed housing development comprising 2¹/₂ storey houses.

The proposed development has therefore been designed to take account of the character of this surrounding development and as such, has been kept largely 2 storey in appearance but with one apartment being provided in the roofspace with insertion of dormer windows. The development incorporates a variety of roof styles to add interest and break up the bulk of the building. In particular, the central element has a lower roof and is recessed slightly from the main elevation of the building and therefore appears as a subservient element thereby emphasising the remaining two sections of the building which have the appearance of domestic scale dwellings.

Use

It has already been described above that the proposed residential use complements the existing surrounding residential development. It will provide for one and two bedroom apartments which will contribute to the mix of dwelling types in the locality.

Amount of Development

The proposed development comprises 3 no. 2-bedroom apartments comprising 1 of approximately 60m² on the ground floor and 2 of approximately 50m² on the first floor. There are a further 3 no. 1 bedroom apartments; 1 of approximately 53m² on the ground floor and 1 of an equal size on the first floor. The third apartment of approximately 50m² is located in the roofspace.

On the ground floor, there is a lobby area to gain access to the first and second floor apartments along with a bin store and cycle store.

Vehicular access passes between the ground floor flats to a parking and turning area to the rear.

Layout

There are no habitable rooms containing any windows proposed in the north and south elevations of the building, thereby protecting the amenity of adjoining residents and therefore the main fenestration is in an east-west direction whereby there is ample distance between the proposed building and adjoining properties to mitigate against loss of amenity.

Access is proposed through the building under the first floor accommodation in a position to the north of the existing access currently serving the site and parking facilities will be made available for visitors to the west of the building with resident parking and turning areas to the rear.

Scale

The scale of the proposed building accords with the recently constructed development to the east and comprises 2¹/₂ storey development within the northern section of the proposed building, dropping down to 2 storey development over the vehicular access and within the southern most element of the proposal.

The scale therefore reflects adjoining properties and is broken down through the use of changing roof heights and frontage articulation.

Landscaping

The front boundary of the site will be landscaped and additional planting will be provided within the site to the front of the building and around the parking areas. This will mollify the development and help to assimilate it into the site.

Appearance

The appearance of the building is vernacular in nature and with the use of a variety of materials will comprise an interesting design which will enhance local distinctiveness.

The front elevation has been articulated and roof heights have been varied to help break the mass of the building and to respect the character of adjoining development.

Ballustrading has been introduced into the first floor flat above the proposed vehicular access and bay features have been proposed to the front elevations of both elements of the building to provide visual interest again helping to break the massing of the building.

Access

Access to the site will be direct from Fontwell Avenue linking to the current footway facility and the existing access is to be repositioned further to the north to afford a more central point into the site.

Visibility is adequate to cater for the proposed development which will for all intents and purposes generate less traffic than the existing commercial use on the site. Parking and turning areas are provided to the rear of the proposed building and visitor parking is encouraged within the frontage area.

The proposal therefore provides good access to pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic in accordance with achieving sustainability.

Finally the building will be designed to have regard to the requirements of the Disability Act.