

Recommendation Report for Planning Permission

REF NO: LU/24/26/PL

LOCATION: 1-5 St Martins Lane
Littlehampton
BN17 6BS

PROPOSAL: Extension to the side of the building, external and internal alterations and the installation of solar panels on the roof (resubmission following LU/171/25/PL). This application is in CIL Zone 4 (Zero Rated) as other development.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	This application proposes an extension to the building, 4m in length extending the full width of the building. It includes a roof extension in line with the existing dual pitch roof structure. A front vestibule (1.6sqm) is included.
	The external appearance will match that of the existing structure.
SITE AREA	189sqm.
TOPOGRAPHY	Predominantly flat.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Premises previously used for retail, office and professional services. The site recently gained planning permission to be used as a place of worship and has discharged all relevant conditions.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	Town centre, comprising a mix of commercial, retail, office, leisure and residential uses.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

LU/237/25/DOC	Approval of details reserved by condition imposed under LU/242/24/PL relating to condition 5-Noise Management Plan.	DOC Part Approved 16-12-25
LU/242/24/PL	Change of use to F1 and F2 community centre and place of worship. This application is in CIL zone 4 (zero rated) as other development.	ApproveConditionally 21-02-25

LU/242/24/PL - This application granted the 'Change of use to F1 and F2 community centre and place of worship'.

LU/237/25/DOC - This application discharged the only pre-commencement condition attached to LU/242/24/PL.

Condition 6 of LU/242/24/PL restricts occupation of the approved use until such a time as the approved parking plan had been implemented on site. At the time of the site visit, it was not apparent that the requirement of the condition had been met, however, as the pre-commencement condition has been discharged, and no other material alterations of the building were required under the approved development, the use has been instated despite not yet being occupied.

REPRESENTATIONS

Littlehampton Town Council - No objection.

No other representations received.

COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:

Noted.

CONSULTATIONS

CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED:

WSCC Highways - No objection:

- The scale of the extension is not expected to materially alter the trip generation associated with the approved use.
- There will be a loss of 1 parking space for disabled use which will need to be relocated to the front. The loss of 1 space can be accommodated in the car park.
- LU/242/24/PL stated a typical building capacity of 50 occupants, though up to 150 may attend Friday prayers.
- A theoretical maximum scenario of 150 individuals arriving by car could cause parking pressure at St Martins car park and possibly other nearby car parks or streets.
- St Martins car park provides 209 standard bays and 11 disabled bays, with additional parking at Anchor Springs (27 standard, 2 disabled).
- Local disc-parking areas also offer 2 hours of free parking.
- The Travel Plan survey submitted under LU/242/24/PL shows 36% of worshippers travel by car; applied to 150 attendees, this equals around 54 vehicle trips, which can be accommodated by existing parking.
- Nearby streets (St Martins Road, St Martins Lane, Duke Street) have enforceable parking restrictions, discouraging unsafe or indiscriminate parking.
- Due to potential mixed community use of the building, the Local Planning Authority may consider a condition limiting maximum attendee numbers at any one time.
- WSCC raises no objection to the proposed extension. The anticipated trip impacts can be safely managed by existing town-centre parking capacity, and parking controls are already in place at safety-critical locations.

COMMENTS ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Comments noted. Conditions restricting the number of attendees at any one time would not be reasonable to impose under this application. The condition applied to LU/242/24/PL restricting the number of occupants persists.

The proposal would result in the loss of two parking spaces, neither of which are disabled bays. This was confirmed by WSCC Highways to be an error, but that their conclusions remain the same. This has been considered in the report below.

POLICY CONTEXT

Designation applicable to site:
 Economic Growth Area
 Town Centre Retail Boundary
 2km Buffer for Site of Special Scientific Interest
 CIL Charging Zone 4

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

[Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031:](#)

SDSP2	SD SP2 Built-up Area Boundary
DSP1	D SP1 Design
DDM1	D DM1 Aspects of form and design quality
DDM4	D DM4 Extensions&alter to exist builds(res and non-res)
TSP1	T SP1 Transport and Development
QESP1	QE SP1 Quality of the Environment
ECCSP2	ECC SP2 Energy and climate change mitigation

Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan 2014 Policy 1	The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan 2014 Policy 2	A Spatial Plan for the Town

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE:

NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance

SUPPLEMENTARY POLICY GUIDANCE:

SPD11	Arun Parking Standards 2020
SPD13	Arun District Design Guide (SPD) January 2021

POLICY COMMENTARY

The Development Plan consists of the Arun Local Plan 2011 - 2031, West Sussex County Council's Waste and Minerals Plans, The South Inshore & South Offshore Marine Plan and Made Neighbourhood Development Plans. The policies are published under Regulations 19 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The proposal complies with relevant Development Plan policies in that the character and appearance of development is acceptable and in-keeping with the location, no significant harm is identified to neighbouring residents, and the development would not significantly harm the highways network.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that

(2) in dealing with an application for planning permission the authority shall have regard to -

(a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application,

(aza) a post examination draft neighbourhood development plan, so far as material to the application,

(b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and

(c) any other material considerations.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no other material considerations to be weighed in the balance with the Development Plan.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

This application is not liable for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) under the de-minimis exemption.

CONCLUSIONS

PRINCIPLE

The site is within the Built-up Area Boundary where the principle of development is acceptable in principle in accordance with policy SD SP2 of the Arun Local Plan (ALP), and Policy 2 of the Littlehampton Neighbourhood Development Plan (LNDP), subject to the consideration of other relevant Development Plan policies.

By virtue of compliance with the only other LNDP policy of relevance, Policy 2, the proposal is in accordance with LNDP Policy 1.

CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

The extension will add a 4m long, full-width side addition to the existing building. It will retain the front and rear building lines, with the roof form extended to match. All external materials will replicate those of the existing structure, including the light-coloured render and tiled roof.

Although the extension cannot be described as subservient because neither the frontage nor the ridgeline is set back or reduced, it will form a seamless addition that remains visually coherent with the host building while delivering a high standard of internal accommodation.

The surrounding area, which faces a car park and includes loading and service areas for nearby high-street shops, contains a wide variety of architectural styles and features, including residential properties. Given this eclectic context, the proposed extension, being visually sympathetic to the host building, will not harm the character or appearance of the area.

The proposal includes the introduction of solar panels along the eastern roof slope. These would have no unacceptable visual impacts in the prevailing mixed design character of the area.

The proposal is in accordance with ALP policies D SP1, D DM1, and D DM4, and Part J of the ADG.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The extension does not protrude any closer to any neighbouring residential properties and is sufficiently separated from them such that there would be no significantly adverse impacts by way of overshadowing or overbearing.

The proposal is an extension of a non-habitable building and the new openings would not result in any unacceptable cumulative or additional impacts on neighbouring residential properties by way of overlooking or inter-overlooking.

The proposal is in accordance with ALP policies D DM1 and QE SP1.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Arun has adopted a Parking Standards SPD (Jan 2020) (APS). Principle 1 2.12 stresses that parking provision should be sufficient to accommodate demand whilst exploiting the potential for sustainable travel, minimizing adverse effects on road safety, and avoiding increased on-street parking demand.

Table 4.1 of the APS sets out requirements for vehicular and cycle parking provision in non-residential developments. This table references the use classes prior to the change in 2020, including Class D1 for which a travel plan is required. Class D1 is now covered by the newly introduced Class F1 use, which the building is now to operate as.

The application for the change of use to Class F1 (LU/242/24/PL), was required to be supported by a Travel Plan to ascertain the anticipated number and frequency of visitors, their modes of transport, and at what times. This was reviewed by WSCC Highways, and with consideration of these details, the on-site parking provisions, the quantum of public parking available in the vicinity, and the highly sustainable location, the parking arrangements for the site were ultimately, concluded as acceptable.

The extension would result in the net loss of 2 No. parking bays on site, and a modest increase in internal floor space which would in turn, have the potential to increase the visitor/user capacity of the site. One of the parking bays to be lost would be a disabled bay.

WSCC Highways reviewed this application with knowledge and due consideration of LU/242/24/PL and the context of the site and the current application. WSCC Highways noted the loss of one disabled parking space. This was flagged with them as an error as two normal parking spaces to the north side of the building would be lost, neither of which are currently disabled bays. With consideration of the remaining on-site parking provisions, the quantum of public parking available in the vicinity, and the highly sustainable location, the parking arrangements for the site have been concluded to remain acceptable.

While LU/242/24/PL proposed to secure one disabled bay on site, and if this permission were to be implemented, this bay would not be able to be provided as approved, it is noted that there is no specific requirement for a disabled bay to be provided on site for the use of the building. WSCC Guidance on Parking for New Developments suggests 5% of on-site parking spaces should be disabled bays. In this instance, 5% of the remaining five parking bays on site would be 0.25 spaces, which rounds down to a requirement of zero. There are 3 No. disabled parking spaces reserved for Disabled Badge holders immediately opposite the front of the site, alongside additional disabled parking bays in St Martin's Car Park and Anchor Springs, which are both a short distance from the site. While disabled parking bays on site would be preferred, the site would remain sufficiently accessible to those with disabilities.

There remain sufficient cycle parking arrangements within the vicinity and it is not necessary to seek on-site sheltered and secure cycle parking provisions.

The proposal is in accordance with ALP policy T SP1.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The proposal includes the installation of solar panels along the eastern roof slope. This is acceptable and supported by ALP policy ECC SP2.

SUMMARY

The proposal is in accordance with relevant Development Plan policies and as such, it is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions and informatives.

For clarity, in the event that the development granted under this application is implemented, Condition 6 of LU/242/24/PL would no longer be able to be complied with as the extension would then occupy part of the parking arrangements secured by that condition. However, in the event that this permission is not implemented, Condition 6 of LU/242/24/PL remains applicable.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The Council in making a decision should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as Arun District Council to act in a manner, which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Consideration has been specifically given to Article 8 (right to respect private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). It is not considered that the recommendation for approval of the grant of permission in this case interferes unreasonably with any local residents' right to respect for their private and family life and home, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest and the recommendation for approval is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

DUTY UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT 2010

Duty under the Equalities Act 2010

In assessing this proposal the following impacts have been identified upon those people with the following protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

The proposal would have a neutral impact on the protected characteristics.

CIL DETAILS

This application is not CIL liable.

RECOMMENDATION**APPROVE CONDITIONALLY**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as

amended).

- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Location Plan PP-14254921v2.
- Block and Location Plans RR24-058-P-DRG-001, P1.
- Proposed Extension Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations RR24-058-P-DRG-003, P3.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of amenity and the environment in accordance with Arun Local Plan policy D DM1.

- 3 Based on the information available, this permission is exempt from the requirement to provide a biodiversity gain plan under Paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The following exemption applies:

This planning permission is de-minimis as the development does not impact an onsite priority habitat and the development impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has a biodiversity value greater than zero and less than then 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

Reason: In accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 4 INFORMATIVE: Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the NPPF.

- 5 INFORMATIVE: In the event of this permission being implemented, it would not be possible to implement LU/242/24/PL in accordance with Condition 6 of LU/242/24/PL because the extension would occupy part of the site that would be secured as parking by Condition 6. In the event that this permission (LU/24/26/PL) is not implemented, Condition 6 of LU/242/24/PL must still be complied with.

The applicant is also advised that all other restrictive conditions applied to LU/242/24/PL remain applicable to this site in the event that this permission (LU/24/26/PL) is implemented.