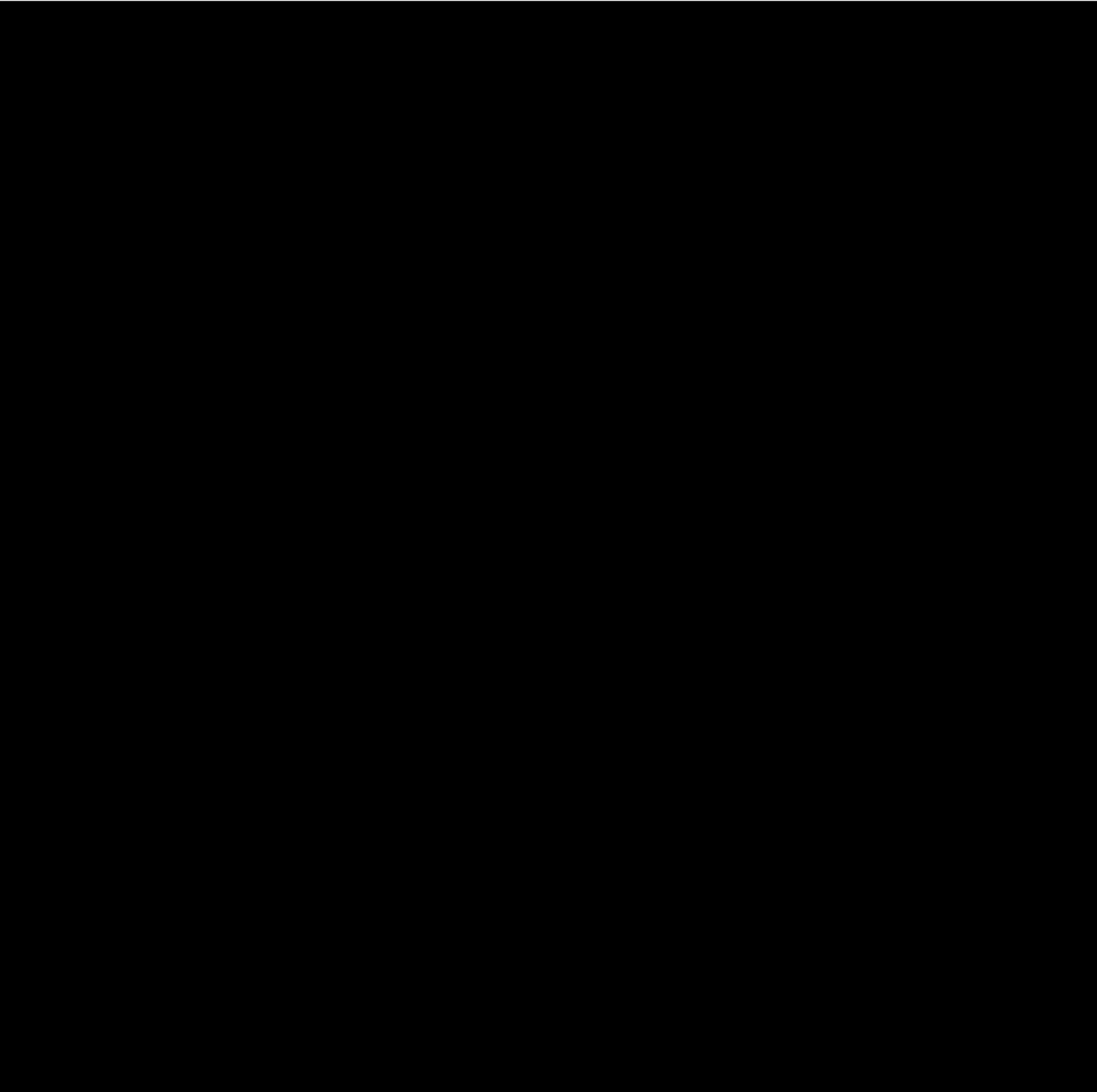




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**From:** Martyn White <[Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk](mailto:Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 04 November 2021 15:50  
**To:** Anita Gardner <[Anita.Gardner@arun.gov.uk](mailto:Anita.Gardner@arun.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** LU/251/21/PL

**LU/251/21/PL**

*57 River Road Littlehampton BN17 5DD*

*Partial demolition of number 57 River Road, change of use & redevelopment to provide a flatted development comprising 6 No apartments, with private amenity space, parking & cycle storage.*

*including the partial demolition of the adjacent boundary wall to provide a new pedestrian access & the creation of a floating pontoon with resident morning spaces (resubmission following LU/247/21/PL). This application affects the character & appearance of the Littlehampton River Road Conservation Area & is in CIL Zone 4 (Zero Rated) as flats*

The existing property is an attractive small warehouse that has clearly been adapted a number of times since its construction. It is one of two unlisted, but locally important buildings, which are rare survivals of the east bank wharves and quays. The other building being 49 River Road. The property also has an area of land to one side which is enclosed by walling to the road.

The Littlehampton Extensive Urban Survey states: '(at) 47 River Road an early riverside flint and brick warehouse survives, with a mid-19th century warehouse built adjoining to the north-west (now Riverside Autos)'.

It is considered that, even with these changes, as one of the last remaining wharfs in the town, it makes a positive contribution towards the character and appearance of the conservation area. As such, it has been identified as a Locally Listed Building or Structure of Character (policy HER DM2 of the Arun Local Plan). The aforementioned neighbouring property is another Building or Structures of Character (49 River Road). Both properties were identified as such when the list was adopted by the council in 2005.

In addition, the property is located within the Littlehampton (River Road) Conservation Area. A key element of the conservation area is its relationship with the river. River Road runs parallel to the river (to its west) and the site looks directly on to it. Wharves were developed in the area in the 18th century and, especially the early 19th century. The conservation area was enlarged and extended westwards in 1991 to include some of the remaining 19th century riverside buildings and those fronting Terminus Road which reflect the growth of the harbour at that period. It is of architectural and historic significance.

## **The proposal**

The proposal is for the partial demolition of the existing building, retaining the front façade (which would be repaired) and the construction of two linked blocks of apartments. This is a similar approach to that already undertaken to the neighbouring building.

## **Context**

Whilst the road consists of a number of terraces with narrow vertical breaks, it should be noted that the yard to the side of 47 River Road is one of the last remaining undeveloped areas along the road. In addition, it appears to be an area of land that is associated with the property. This area of land is therefore important to the character of the local area, as well as for its association with 47 River Road.

Historical mapping identifies that the area has remained undeveloped and unchanged. It also affords the opportunity to look out of the conservation area to the west bank and further remains of further remnants of the area's association with the river. However, it is acknowledged that the new river wall unfortunately reduces the links with the river from the road.

The development of this section of undeveloped land would result in the loss of this space. Whilst it would be desirable to retain such a gap site in order to preserve the pattern and rhythm of development in the street, it is also acknowledged that the site and the building are both in a poor state of repair which detracts from the generally positive nature of the conservation area, when taken as a whole. It is considered that the redevelopment of this site offers the opportunity to improve this part of the conservation area, which is positive.

## Loss of the asset

The proposal seeks to replicate the approach undertaken with the neighbouring development. That is to say, retaining the front façade of the existing warehouse and developing behind it. Unlike the neighbouring development, this proposal will also encroach upon the land to its side.

The existing building is considered to be important to the sense of place and local history, and it is considered that its loss would be harmful to the local character of the conservation area. However, as identified in the heritage statement the building has been altered including loss of original materials, it has been truncated and some historic fabric altered.

It is thought that the loss of the building could be considered acceptable as a result of issues related to its lack of structural ability to tolerate conversion. As I have tried to state previously, I am not a structural engineer and am unable to comment upon the ability or not for it to be put into an economic re-use. I note from the heritage statement that there are references made to the fact that the poor condition, constraints of the building and the costs of repair and refurbishment renders it beyond economic repair and salvage. Therefore, if this is the case I would want for the building to be recorded prior to its demolition, so that the information can be placed on the Historic Environment Record and provided to the local museum.

Further, (in this instance) the retention of that element of the building which is visible to the road is positive. It might also help for an information board to be provided so that anyone looking at the development could understand the history of the site/immediate area. This could be undertaken in association with the local heritage group.

I would also suggest that it would be positive to incorporate some of the flints into the new development, and other salvageable materials to be re-used where possible.

## The Proposed Development

The proposed development consists of two blocks of apartments with a glazed central area which incorporates the access stairs. The concept of splitting the building with a glazed area in between seems to be a positive approach, as it allows some of the existing space between the buildings to be retained. It also replicates the spaces between the other buildings along this side of the street. Likewise, the use of pitched roofs is also positive and reflected in buildings in the local area. The modern design elements also reflect those of the neighbouring building, which also incorporates some elements of former warehouses.

The southern block 'steps' down towards the neighbouring locally listed building, and this is a positive feature of the proposal. Such a proposal is an improvement on the previous scheme.

If carefully detailed and high-quality materials are used, I am of the opinion that the development would reflect the recently built adjoining terrace and the character / appearance of the conservation area when taken as a whole. If you are minded to recommend approval. I would like for details of all external materials and joinery to be provided for by way of condition

## **Conclusion**

A programme of historic building recording along with the provision of an information board regarding the history of the site and Conservation Area), and retaining the front elevation are positive features of the proposal. The revised scheme is an improvement on the previous one and would result in the removal of an unkept site in the conservation area. Subject to confirmation over

the use of high quality materials, I am of the opinion that the proposed scheme would result in an acceptable development.

Therefore, on balance the application is considered to not cause harm to the conservation area (when considered in its entirety). 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)

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