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Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd
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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Conservation Officer
Sent: 18 February 2026 16:22
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Kathryn Welch <Kathryn.Welch@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: LU/29/26/PL

LU/29/26/PL

25 River Road Littlehampton BN17 5BZ

Demolition of existing garage/offices with associated hard standing and construction of 2 No residential building comprising of 3 No one bedroom houses and 1 No two bedroom house. This application affects the character and appearance of the Littlehampton (River Road) Conservation Area and is in CIL Zone 4 and is CIL Liable as new dwellings.

The application site is located within the Littlehampton – River Road Conservation Area. Sadly whilst a planning and heritage statement has been submitted as part of the application it fails to

identify the significance of the conservation area; or undertake a thorough assessment of the impact of the proposal upon that significance. however, I will undertake my own assessment.

The River Road Conservation Area is situated to the west of Littlehampton town centre and runs parallel to the River Arun. It developed in several stages during the first half of the 19th Century. At the Surrey Street end the buildings as far as Hampton Court were originally known as Seaview and contains all the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area. They were originally occupied by town dignitaries and those who had an interest in the sea and seafaring. This group are of two- and three-storey town houses built as semi-detached houses or in short blocks.

Of greater relevance to this application is the presence of a second distinct area to the west of Hampton Court and along lengths of Purbeck Place end Terminus Place. The buildings in this area are smaller and simpler than those to the east. They are predominantly of two storeys and front on to the carriage way. The elevations are treated with painted render. The application site is located within this area.

The existing garage building is single-storey and set back from the building line of the River Road frontage, and is also set back from Terminus Road, being located behind a large area of hardstanding. The site represents a large area of previously used land within the conservation area and offers the opportunity to better reveal the significance of the area.

The Proposal

The application proposes the demolition of the existing car garage/workshop and the erection of two buildings, which collectively provide four residential units. One of the blocks will front on to River Road, whilst the other will front on to Terminus Place. Both of the buildings will be two storeys and would be rendered with pitched roof elements. The application raises a number of issues which shall be discussed in turn below:

Change of use

Historically, the conservation area would have had a more diverse mix of uses, which have (to some extent) informed the development of the area. However, as of 2026 it is predominantly residential in nature with limited alternative uses present in the locality. The properties immediately surrounding the site appear to be purely residential, with modern development from the last 20 or so years having taken place in the location of former river wharfs. It is therefore considered that the change of use of the land from commercial to residential will not harm the established character of the road.

The loss of the existing garage building

It is considered that the structure does not make an important contribution towards the established character of the street-scene. In-fact it can be considered to detract from the neighbouring properties when viewed from River Road. Further, the current condition of the building/site detracts from the conservation area and causes harm to it. Therefore, its loss and redevelopment can be considered to be an enhancement of the local area and is therefore acceptable. This is, as always, subject to the details of the replacement development, which is expected to be of a standard appropriate for its historic context.

The Proposed Development

New buildings are more likely to look as if they belong to an area if they are sited and arranged in much the same way as those already there. In this conservation area most of the traditional buildings front directly on to the pavement or have small garden areas in front of them, each telling

something about their age, status and use. The buildings are very much part of the street scene and play a significant role in the character of the area.

The concept of redeveloping the site offers the opportunity to better reveal what is important about the site and local area, whilst also removing a vacant/poorly maintained building. This concept should inform the proposed design of the development, as should a clear assessment of the local area.

The proposed buildings would have their own separate frontages onto either River Road or Terminus Place. The River Road building would follow the building line of the neighbouring properties, whilst the Terminus Place building is set back within what looks like the original building limit. This allows for space to accommodate parking spaces. The concept of maintaining the River Road street frontage will ensure that the character of the local area can be reflected, which is positive.

The River Road building would be two-storey with a pitched roof and parapet detailing. It is positive to note that the building reflects the characteristics of the River Road buildings in that it would have a rendered finish with timber-framed sash windows.

The Terminus Place building will be part single storey and part two-storey, and, like the River Road building, the fenestration pattern appears as a traditional design – in this case casement. When I visited the site it was clear that the properties fronting on to Terminus Place were smaller in scale than those on River Road and the design of this building attempts to reflect these qualities. This is noted in the fenestration arrangement and material palette.

The success of the scheme, and therefore its impact on the conservation area and the neighbouring buildings, will depend heavily on the quality of the materials, fixtures and fittings. Traditional materials must be used, and windows, doors and other features must be appropriately detailed. Any failure to achieve this would detract from the character and appearance of the area and would result in harm.

The proposed use of render on both buildings is positive, as is the use of timber for the windows. The attempt to reflect the pattern of traditional fenestration is noted. However, deeper window and doorway recesses are required to align with local detailing, and doorways would benefit from simple hoods. The windows should be fully functioning sliding sashes of a design and profile appropriate for a sensitive historic location such as this. It is not clear what materials are proposed for the doors, but they should also be timber in order to preserve the character of the buildings and the wider conservation area.

Traditional roofing materials in the conservation area are natural slate and plain clay tiles, with natural slate characteristic of the late-19th- and early-20th-century buildings. Modern substitutes would be harmful and should be avoided; natural slate, which weathers positively and contributes to the area's established character, should be used instead.

Details of all materials, colours and joinery should be secured by condition should you be minded to support the application. These details should be provided through appropriately scaled drawings, including cross-sections showing the frame, glazing bars and their position within the window opening.

Conclusion

The existing site detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area, and its redevelopment offers the opportunity for it to make a better contribution to the street-scene. In conclusion, subject to high quality details and finishes, it is considered that the proposal is

considered to not cause harm to the significance of the heritage assets. 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 section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).




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