

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

REF NO: LU/71/09/

LOCATION: 7& 9 Norfolk Road
Littlehampton

PROPOSAL: Alterations to frontage and interior to change use of two existing shops to form two new residential units. (Re-submission following LU/7/09/)

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	External changes which will involve the walling up of the shop fronts and the removal of fascias on the south and west elevations of 7 Norfolk Road plus internal alterations with parking provision to the rear of 7 & 9 Norfolk Road.
SITE AREA	Approximately 226 square metres.
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DEN	N/A
TOPOGRAPHY	Slopes gently downwards from west to east.
TREES	None affected by the proposed development.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	The building faces directly onto Norfolk Road to the west and Western Road to the south. There is a yard to the rear that backs onto flank elevation walls of outbuildings to the east and part 1.8m flint wall.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Two buildings that are sited at the end of a terrace which are three storeys in height, dormer on front west elevation, two storey extension on the rear with external staircase to first floor flat accommodation. Shop front on west, two shop fronts on south elevation. No 9 which does not form part of this application is a restaurant.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	Predominantly residential with terraced properties, The New Inn to south of site, flats and convenience store to west of site.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

LU/7/09/	Alterations to frontage and interior to change use of two existing shops to form two new residential units	Refused 23-03-2009
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REPRESENTATIONS

Representations received:
Littlehampton Town Council

No objection.

3 Letters of Objection

Loss of retail units in this area of Littlehampton. Loss of Mortimer's cafe at No 9. Structural deterioration to the front of the property over many years.

Limited parking and the locality cannot sustain further residential use. Owner has made no attempt to market the premises.

3 Letters of Support

Applicant has owned the premises for 25 years. He is unable to find a suitable tenant and to avoid the premises being vacant I support the application for conversion of shops to flat. The conversion to two dwellings is something that is much needed in this town and as the units have been proven to be economically viable over a long period of time I feel that the change of use would benefit the area. The appearance of the units does nothing to enhance the street scene or attractiveness of the area and there is a desperate shortage of family residential units.

Comments on Representations received:

None

CONSULTATIONS

Property Services Manager

Conservation Officer

WSCC Local Development Divis.

Consultations responses received:

Property Services Manager

I have looked at this application and whilst there is not a complete questionnaire regarding the marketing of the property to substantiate that A1 is no longer viable. The conclusion is likely to be that it is not and that a change of use to residential is unlikely to be detrimental to the economy of the area through the loss of a retail use.

Conservation Officer

It is a pity to lose the retail uses but if they are not viable then this proposal is a satisfactory use of the building. Do we really have to have top-hung PVCu casements. If there is no reason to resist because the remainder of the building has plastic windows then at least we should be seeking vertically sliding PVCu sashes, particularly since the new windows will be down at street level.

County Highway's

The vehicular access is used for parking already and the most recently available verified accident records reveal that there have been no personal injury accidents in the vicinity of the existing point of access. Parking to the amount of one space per dwelling is provided to the rear of the property on a first come, first served basis and the proposal is unlikely to affect parking to the extent where a highway safety issue arises. Any approval of planning permission would be subject to a cycle parking condition.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

New front door should be recessed and windows.

Comments on Consultation responses:

Comments noted.

The use of vertically sliding PVCu sashes would look out of keeping with the existing building. A recessed front door and recessed windows would look out of context with neighbouring properties. If approved, a condition is to be imposed regarding secure cycle storage.

POLICY CONTEXT

Designation applicable to site:

Within Built Up Area Boundary
Outside Principle Shopping Area
Within Littlehampton Beach Conservation Area

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

South East Plan:

Arun District Local Plan:	GEN2	Built-up Area Boundary
	GEN7	The Form of New Development
	DEV30	Local and Village Centres
	AREA2	Conservation Areas

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

PPS1	Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG3	Housing
PPG13	Transport
PPG15	Planning and the Historic Environment

POLICY COMMENTARY

The above policies combine to describe the criteria against which the application will be assessed particularly with regard to visual and residential amenity, character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

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 is considered to comply with relevant Development Plan policy DEV30 as satisfactory information has been submitted which substantiates that retail use is no longer viable.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is considered that there are other material considerations to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan and/or legislative background. The loss of the retail unit in this location is unlikely to cause harm or have an adverse impact upon the established character of the surrounding area.

CONCLUSIONS

The site lies in the Littlehampton Beach Conservation Area and the site is located at the end of a terrace on a corner plot Norfolk Road to the west and Western Road to the south. The premises are located outside of the defined Principal Shopping Area.

The application seeks to change the use of the ground floor of No 7 Norfolk Road from shops to two self-contained one bedroom residential units, incorporating one existing first floor bedroom and does not include the premises at No 9 but includes the parking in the rear yard which is located behind Nos 7 and 9. A previous application LU/7/09 for the same scheme was refused as a viability statement had not been submitted with the application and it was impossible to determine whether the building could still serve as viable retail premises.

The proposal will not involve any increase in size to the building, the two shop fronts on the south elevation are to be removed, bricked up and replaced by four windows and an entrance door which will serve Flat B. The west elevation shop front is to be replaced by a window and an entrance door which will serve Flat A and the form of the alterations takes into account the form and scale of neighbouring properties.

The proposed ground floor windows on the south side elevation will face towards the windows of the New Inn to the south but with sufficient distance of approximately 15m it is not considered that they would create any harmful overlooking or loss of privacy.

The proposed residential units are within short walking distance of a bus service and within walking distance of a main line railway station. There is parking provision for two vehicles in the yard to the rear of the site with space for cycles, waste and recycling bins. County Highway's have been consulted and have raised no objection from a highway point of view but request that a condition be imposed regarding secure cycle parking.

In line with Local Plan policy DEV30, sufficient information has now been submitted to substantiate that retail use is no longer viable and a change of use to residential would not detrimentally harm the economy of the area.

The proposal is considered to relate sympathetically to the surrounding Conservation Area and the painted rendered walls are in keeping with the surrounding residential area.

It is therefore recommended that the application be approved, subject to the following conditions.

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 materials and finishes of the external walls of the building hereby permitted shall match in colour and texture those of the existing building.

Reason: In the interests of amenity in accordance with policies DEV1 of the West Sussex Structure Plan and GEN7 of the Arun District Local Plan.

- 3 The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until covered secure parking spaces have been provided in accordance with a detailed construction plan to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with PPG3.

- 4 INFORMATIVE: Summary of Reasons for Grant Article 22(1) General Development Procedure Order 1995

SUMMARY

This planning permission is granted because it complies with the policies listed below in that the development would not cause any material adverse effect on visual or residential amenity on the surrounding area, the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and there are no material considerations to indicate otherwise.

RELEVANT POLICIES

LOCAL PLAN: GEN2, GEN7, DEV30, AREA2

NATIONAL POLICIES: PPS1, PPG3, PPG13, PPG15

This is only a summary of reasons for granting to comply with Article 22 and full reasons appear in the Officer report.