

KP/Cir.M.0329

26th March 2014

Planning Services
Havant Borough Council
Public Services Plaza
Civic Centre Road
Havant
Hampshire
PO9 2AX

Dear Sir / Madam

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Planning application for external alterations to first floor and erection of second floor to comprise 4 no. apartments.

At 4B Fernwood House, 45-47 London Road, Cowplain

Please find enclosed a planning application which I hereby submit on behalf of my client Martin Slowe for external alterations to first floor and erection of second floor to comprise 4 no. apartments at 4B Fernwood House, 45-47 London Road, Cowplain.

As part of this planning application please find enclosed the following documentation:-

- The relevant application forms and Certificates of Ownership;
- Site Location Plan (ref: M.0329_01-1);
- Proposed Block Plan (ref: M.0329_08-1);
- Existing Elevations (ref: M.0329_04-1);
- Proposed Second Floor Plan (ref: M.0329_10-1);
- Proposed SE and NE Elevations (ref: M.0329_06-1);
- Proposed NW and SW Elevations (ref: M.0329_07-1);
- Biodiversity Checklist;
- CIL Questionnaire;
- Pre-application correspondence;
- A cheque for £1,540 made payable to Portsmouth City Council to cover the relevant application fee.

Site Location

The application site is located on the western side of London Road, within the Cowplain District Shopping Centre. The District Shopping Centre is linear in layout and comprises a variety of buildings that together form a continuous retail frontage along the western side of London Road. The application site itself comprises the end of a terrace of 4 retail units that face east onto London Road and north onto Kings Road.

The ground floor of the application site is occupied by two restaurants and does not form part of this application. The first floor is currently in B1 (a) office use and as set out below is proposed to be converted to residential use (4 no. apartments) under Schedule 2, Part 3,

Class J of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).

Relevant Background

The application site and part of the ground floor of 4B Fernwood House has been the subject of 2 recent planning applications as follows:

- 09/73432/001 – Conversion of existing first floor office space into 2 no. 1 bed flats and 1 no. 2 bed flat with parking, cycles storage and bins. Permitted 6th May 2009.
- 09/73432/002 – Change of use of ground floor and first floor (along Kings Road) from music school (Class D1) to offices (Class B1).

A Notification letter has also been submitted to Havant Borough Council alongside this application notifying the Council of proposals to change the use of the first floor from offices (use class B1 (a)) to residential (use class C3) under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class J of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).

Application Proposals

The application proposals comprise external alterations to the first floor and the erection of a second floor to provide 4 no. apartments.

The external alterations proposed to the first floor would be associated with the change of use of the first floor from offices to residential (under Schedule 2 Part 3 Class J of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) as referred to above).

At first floor level the existing continuous glazing and panelling is proposed to be removed and replaced with brick walling consistent with the first floor of the adjoining building to the south. The second floor would be aluminium cladding providing a modern transition between the first and second floors whilst also enabling the second floor to be marginally set back from the first floor further reinforcing that it is an extension to the original building.

Window openings at both first and second floor level would be consistent in width, depth and positioning, providing rhythm along the elevations. The windows themselves would be aluminium in keeping with the proposed second floor addition and maintaining the modern design rationale.

Internally, the proposed second floor would provide 4 no. apartments (1 no. 3 bed, 2 no. 2 bed and 1 no. 1 bed).

Residents would have access to the existing car park to the rear of Fernwood House which also serves the wider building. The existing external space to the rear of the building would also provide space for the storage and collection of refuse.

Pre-Application Advice

Pre-application advice was sought from the Council and a meeting was held with Aaron Wright on 8th November 2013. The principle of the second floor extension was accepted at the meeting, subject to the detailed design and overall enhancement of the buildings visual appearance.

It was also agreed that it would not be necessary to meet the Council's minimum parking standards due to the sites sustainable location.

A subsequent email (copy enclosed) was sent to the Council summarising the pre-application advice provided, however no response was received.

Relevant Planning Policy

Section 38(6) of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

The adopted Development Plan in this case comprises the saved Policies of the Havant Local Plan (adopted September 2005) and the Havant Local Plan (Core Strategy) (adopted in March 2011).

Saved Policies of the Havant Local Plan (adopted 2005)

There are no saved policies relevant to this application.

Havant Local Plan (Core Strategy) (adopted 2011)

Policy CS6 states that planning permission will be granted for development which positively contributes by type of use and design and by its comprehensive approach to the social, economic and/or physical regeneration of the borough.

Policy CS9 states that planning permission will be granted for housing proposals that will (but not exclusively):

- Ensure mixed communities are created;
- Achieve a suitable density of development for the location, taking into account accessibility to public transport and proximity to employment, shops and services in addition to respecting the surrounding landscape, character and built form.

The Policy also requires the provision of affordable housing on schemes for 5 or more dwellings.

Policy CS14 requires residential development to meet level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Policy CS16 seeks to achieve a high standard of design as part of new development, including producing a positive relationship between buildings, streets and spaces both existing and proposed; contributing to the improvement of the public realm close to the development, particularly sites close to town, district and local centres by using high quality hard and soft landscape material; and maximises opportunities for mixed use developments, particularly in town and district centres encouraging higher densities (50+ dwellings per hectare) where appropriate.

Policy CS17 states that development will be permitted that makes the most effective use of land in the Borough by granting planning permission that concentrates new housing within the five urban areas of Havant, Leigh Park, Waterlooville, Emsworth and Hayling Island and which prioritises development on previously developed land, including redundant, derelict or underused land and buildings within the urban area.

Policy CS20 seeks to permit development that does not increase congestion and promotes better use of existing transport networks as well as improving accessibility to goods, services and employment and promotes equality in the transport system.

Policy DM13 refers to the Council's car and cycle parking standards with reference to the Council's Residential Car Parking and Cycle Provision Supplementary Planning Document.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 14 sets out that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through both plan-making and decision-taking. Paragraph 14 continues to state that for decision-taking this means (unless material considerations indicate otherwise) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

Section 6 considers the delivery of a 'wide choice of high quality homes' setting out the need to significantly boost the supply of housing. Paragraph 49 states that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 50 states that to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.

Section 7 sets out the great importance that the Government attaches to the design of the built environment. Paragraph 60 states that

"planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles"

Paragraphs 17 and 111 encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value.

Planning Assessment

The key planning issues are considered to be:

1. Principle of Development;
2. Impact on the character and appearance of the area;
3. Highway Impact;
4. Residential Amenity;
5. Sustainability;
6. CIL.

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the urban area of Waterloooville (as defined on the Core Strategy Key Diagram), where the principle of residential development is acceptable, in accordance with Havant Core Strategy Policy CS17 which seeks to concentrate new housing development within the Borough's five urban areas with priority placed on the development of previously developed land, as well as the NPPF which sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The site is also located within the Cowplain District Shopping Centre which provides a range of retail facilities (including convenience stores, banks, chemists and takeaways). The Cowplain Family Practice (Medical Centre) is also located to the west of London Road and the District Centre and a regular (every 15 minutes) bus service operates along London Road providing services between Clanfield and Gunwharf Keys (Portsmouth). The application site is therefore in a highly sustainable location and as such proposals for the erection of a second floor above 4B Fernwood House to provide 4 no. apartments would comply with Core Strategy Policy CS9 in terms of achieving a suitable density of development for the location, taking into account accessibility to public transport and proximity to employment, shops and services.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

The Cowplain District Shopping Centre is characterised by a mix of properties, the ground floors of which are occupied by a variety of retail uses. First floors are in a variety of uses, including uses ancillary to the ground floor retail uses, offices and residential. The application site itself forms part of 4B Fernwood House which is an end of terrace property circa 1960. The property is a pale yellow brick built construction with a flat roof. The front (east) elevation however primarily comprises the aforementioned restaurant frontages at ground floor level and the first floor is a combination of glazing and panels painted blue. The side and rear elevations are predominantly brick. The building is not considered to be of any architectural merit and is somewhat tired and dated in appearance.

The application proposes to erect a second floor above 4B Fernwood House and to make external alterations to the first floor. The design cue for the development has been taken from Silvester House to the south of the application site on the corner of London Road and Silvester Street as well as the Cowplain Family Practice to the north east of the application site on the opposite side of London Road. Both of these buildings comprise three storeys establishing the principle of three storey buildings within the vicinity. Silvester House has also been recently refurbished introducing a modern design concept into the District Centre.

The design of the proposed extension seeks to reflect the modern design of Silvester House and the Family Practice whilst also reflecting the existing design of Fernwood House in terms of its flat roof construction. The existing continuous glazing and blue panels would be removed from the first floor and replaced with brick and aluminium windows. The introduction of brick would be consistent with the wider Fernwood House and aluminium windows would be in keeping with the proposed modern design concept. The second floor is proposed to be marginally set back from the first floor and aluminium clad. The aluminium cladding would provide a transition between the first and second floors as well as enabling the second floor to have an ancillary and subservient relationship to the first and ground floors. It is also proposed to create two balconies to serve units 6 and 7, providing external amenity space for two of the units as well as providing variation along the frontage elevation. The balconies would be inset into the building rather than protruding.

The proposed second floor extension and external alterations at first floor level would lead to an overall enhancement of the buildings visual appearance which is somewhat tired and dated. As set out above the District Centre is characterised by a variety of building styles and genres and as such there is no strong architectural style. The application proposals would however follow the modern design cue that is prevalent in the most recent developments within and adjoining the District Centre (i.e. Silvester House and the Family Medical Practice) and would deliver a high standard of design, leading to an overall

enhancement of the public realm within the District Centre, in accordance with Havant Local Plan (Core Strategy) Policy CS16.

Highway Impact

The application site is located in a highly sustainable location where future residents would be within very close walking distance of a range of facilities within and adjoining the District Centre, as well as a regular bus service between Clanfield and Gunwharf Keys (Portsmouth). The application proposals would therefore promote accessibility to goods, services and employment in accordance with Havant Local Plan (Core Strategy) Policy CS20.

Residents would have access to the existing car park to the rear of Fernwood House which also serves the wider building. In addition, as set out above the site is located in an area where future occupants would be able to use alternative forms of transport including walking and bus services. Furthermore there is a large public car park to the rear (west) of the District Centre as well as on street car parking to the front of part of the District Centre, providing additional car parking opportunities for visitors to future residents.

Furthermore, pre-application advice from the Council advised that it would not be necessary to meet the Council's minimum parking standards due to the sites sustainable location.

On the basis of the sites sustainable location as well as the small scale of the proposals the proposals are not considered to have an unacceptable impact in terms of highway safety.

Residential Amenity

The application site is located in a mixed use area characterised by predominantly residential and retail uses with a number of residential uses above retail units within the District Centre and residential properties located to the east (opposite) of the District Centre as well as to the north of the application site (along Kings Road).

The proposed residential properties would therefore be consistent with surrounding land uses and would not harm the residential amenity of existing properties and likewise surrounding land uses would not harm the residential amenity of future occupants.

There would also be sufficient distance between the application site and surrounding properties so as to not lead to adverse overlooking or overshadowing.

Sustainability

The requirements of Havant Local Plan (Core Strategy) Policy CS14 are acknowledged and the application proposals will comply with the requirement for the new properties to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3.

CIL Requirements

In accordance with the Council's CIL (adopted in February 2013) the Council's CIL questionnaire is submitted as part of the application and it is acknowledged that a CIL levy of £80 per sq. m will be payable in respect of the proposed additional floorspace.

Conclusion

The application proposals would provide 4 no. apartments in a highly sustainable location within the urban area of Waterlooville, contributing to the Council's overall housing requirement as well as central government's commitment (s set out in the NPPF) to significantly boost the supply of housing.

Externally the proposals will lead to an overall enhancement of the external appearance of the existing building which is somewhat tired and dated and by virtue of the sites highly sustainable location the proposals will not have an adverse impact on highway safety.

I trust that the above and enclosed are sufficient to register the application, however please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours faithfully



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Enc.