

Committee Report 7 January 2014

App.No: 130520 (PPP)	Decision Due Date: 5 December 2013	Ward: Meads
Officer: Richard Elder	Site visit date: 26 November 2013	Type: Planning Permission
Site Notice(s) Expiry date: N/A		
Neigh. Con Expiry: 30 October 2013		
Weekly list Expiry:		
Press Notice(s): N/A		
Over 8/13 week reason: To align with Planning Committee schedule		
Location: Saffrons View, 11 Meads Road, Eastbourne		
Proposal: Retrospective application for the conversion of basement into 2 no. studio flats (previous approval was for 1no. flat) through re-orientation of internal space.		
Applicant: Mrs Anne Waterman		
Recommendation: Approve conditionally		

Planning Status:

Predominantly residential area

Relevant Planning Policies:

Eastbourne Core Strategy Policies

- B1 Spatial Development Strategy
- B2 Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- C1 Town Centre Neighbourhood Policy
- C11 Meads Neighbourhood Policy
- D5 Housing

Borough Plan Saved Policies

- HO20 Residential Amenity
- HO9 Conversions and Change of Use
- HO2 Predominantly Residential Areas
- UHT1 Design of New Development

UHT4 Visual Amenity

Site Description:

The application site comprises a large 3 storey detached Victorian building currently in use as flats and bedsits located on the south east side of Meads Road at the junction with Grassington Road and Furness Road.

There are double-gates on the boundary facing Meads Road, although there is not a dropped kerb to provide authorised vehicular access at this point and a vehicular access to a double garage from Furness Road. There is currently enough capacity to park 5 cars within the curtilage and 2 in the garage.

Relevant Planning History:

EB/1950/0087

REINSTATEMENT AND CONV INTO FLAT AND MAIS WITH GARAGE

Approved Unconditional

1950-02-23

EB/1951/0180

GARAGE

Approved Unconditional

1951-06-07

EB/1959/0413

ALTS TO MAIS TO FORM 2 UNITS NOT S/C

Approved Conditional

1959-09-10

EB/1980/0711

CONV OF 1ST AND 2ND FL MAIS INTO 1X1BED & 1X2BED S/C FLATS AND 2 PARKING SPACES AT REAR

Approved Unconditional

1980-12-16

EB/1989/0627

ROOF EXTN TO PROV ADDL BED (FLAT 2)

Approved Unconditional

1989-11-30

EB/2010/0343

Creation of one bedroom flat in basement and provision of additional parking space.

2010-08-18

EB/2010/0699

Use of basement as a separate self-contained flat, including excavation to provide a lightwell, and provision of vehicular access from Meads Road and additional on-site parking (amended description)

APPROVED CONDITIONALLY

2010-12-21

EB/2011/0422

Formation of a one bedroom basement flat below existing ground floor flat, involving excavation of garden on the Furness Road frontage and demolition of existing garages.

Approved Conditionally

2012-01-19

EB/2012/0254

Retrospective application under section 73a for the conversion of the ground floor flat into two one-bedroom flats and two bedsitting room flats.

APPROVED

2012-06-28

Proposed development:

The application seeks retrospective permission for the conversion of part of the basement to 2 studio flats, formation of a lightwell, PVCu windows and associated minor external alterations. The flats are accessed via steps to the north side of the building down to a basement patio area.

The retaining walls to the lightwell are rendered and painted white. The steps and patio area have been paved with what appears to be riven paving slabs and the entire works appear to be complete.

Consultations:

Highways Dept. – No objections received

Neighbour Representations:

One objection has been received and covers the following points:

- Overlooking and loss of privacy from window to side facing the rear garden of flat 2 Saffrons Gate.
- Overdevelopment.
- Increased parking in an already crowded area.

Appraisal:

Design & Layout

Policy H09 of the Eastbourne Local Plan states that the change of use of non-residential premises to residential will be permitted subject to the proposed development being well designed and provides an acceptable standard of accommodation and provision of satisfactory access from the public highway.

Policy B2 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect the residential and environmental amenity of existing and future residents.

The principle of the use has been accepted under application EB/2010/0699 granted permission in December 2010 for a 1 bedroom flat. A site visit to the premises revealed that the flat to the east side of the building gains natural light from the fully glazed front entrance door and an obscure glazed window to the east side which faces onto the neighbours side path. This window has been covered by a fence panel on the neighbours side of Flat 2, Saffron's View and allows minimal levels of natural light through to the living area. The kitchen and bathrooms do not benefit from any windows and natural light. Due to the modest size of this studio flat, it is considered that the fully glazed front entrance door provides just about enough natural light into the living area to provide an acceptable standard of accommodation. The flat has been fitted out to a high standard and all considered, provides an acceptable standard of habitable accommodation. A condition is recommended that the obscure glass is permanently retained in the side window facing Flat 2 Saffron's View to avoid any overlooking or loss of privacy.

The flat to the west side benefits from windows to the north and west elevations as well as from the glazed front entrance door. The flat is smaller in area than the other but has been fitted out to a high standard incorporating an open plan kitchen, living, sleeping area and separate shower room.

Both flats benefit from a basement patio area directly outside accessed from the parking area to the north side of the building where table and chairs have been provided.

Due to the nature of the retrospective proposal involving the conversion of part of the basement, it is considered that the provision of the 2 studio flats would not result in any adverse impact on surrounding residential amenity subject to a condition requiring obscure glazing within the side window to be retained permanently.

As such, it is considered that the conversion of the basement is acceptable and provides an acceptable standard of affordable residential accommodation in accordance with Policies H09 and HO20 of the Eastbourne Local Plan and Policy B2 of the Eastbourne Core Strategy.

Affordable Housing

Policy D5 seeks to deliver housing within the sustainable centres and sustainable neighbourhoods and must take appropriate account of the need identified in the most up-to-date strategic housing market assessment with particular regard to size, type and tenure of dwellings. All development will be required to contribute towards affordable housing where there is a resultant net gain of 1 or more residential units (C3 Use Class).

The proposal would involve a net gain of 2 residential units within a high value neighbourhood which would trigger a requirement of a commuted financial contribution towards affordable housing of £1030.42. The applicant has agreed to the payment of this contribution which shall be secured via a unilateral undertaking prior to the issue of a decision notice. As such, the proposal would meet the requirements of Policy D5 of the Eastbourne Core Strategy.

Highway Considerations

Policy TR11 of the Eastbourne Local plan states that new development must comply with approved maximum car parking standards as set out in the East Sussex County Council Highways SPG parking standards.

Given the site's location within an area of high public transport availability, it is considered that the provision of off-street or allocated parking spaces is not necessary in this instance. East Sussex Highways have been consulted and raise no objection to the proposal. As such, the proposal would accord with Policy TR11 of the Eastbourne Local Plan and the ESCC parking standards.

Human Rights Implications:

It is considered that the proposal would not have any adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residents, nor have any negative impact on human rights, equality and diversity.

Conclusion:

As such, it is considered that the conversion of the basement is acceptable and provides an acceptable standard of affordable residential accommodation in accordance with Policy H09 of the Eastbourne Local Plan and Policy B2 of the Eastbourne Core Strategy. The applicant has agreed to the payment of a £1030.42 contribution which shall be secured via a unilateral undertaking prior to the issue of a decision notice. Given the sites location within an area of high public transport availability, it is considered that the provision of off-street or allocated parking spaces is not necessary in this instance and East Sussex Highways raise no objection.

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions and a unilateral undertaking to secure a financial contribution of £1030.42 towards affordable housing.

Conditions:

1. Drawing numbers – Proposed floor plan - DD/11meads/01, Site location plan.
2. Blocking up of window facing Flat 2, Saffrons Gate (++)

Informatives

1. Pre-commencement conditions

Appeal: Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be **written representations.**