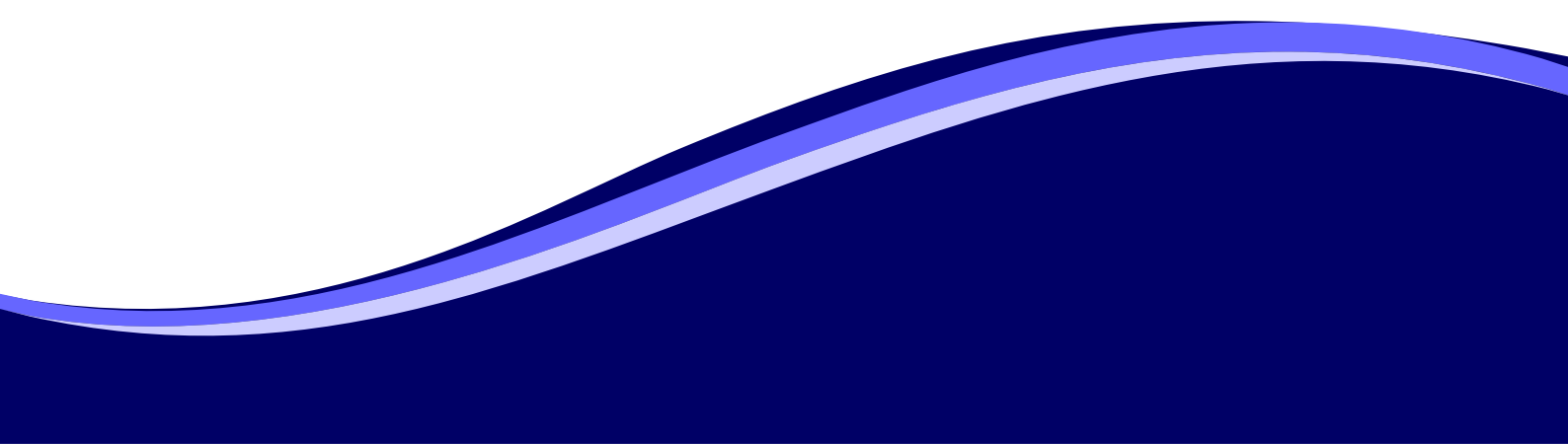


Design, Access & Planning Statement

Prince Albert Public House,
Copthorne Bank,
Copthorne,
Crawley
RH10 3QX

Mixed Use Development

Decorative wavy lines in shades of blue and purple sweep across the bottom of the page, creating a modern, flowing design element.

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Background

The Site & Surroundings

Planning History

Relevant Planning Policy

3. Design Response

Use

Amount

Layout

Scale

Appearance

Landscaping

Access

4. Planning Case



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1 Introduction

Site Address:

The Prince Albert Public House, Copthorne Bank, Copthorne, Crawley RH10 3QX

Proposal:

Sever existing land to retain existing public house use and area of pub garden and erect a convenience store and 4 no. apartments with associated works, including alterations to the existing vehicular access and car park.

Application type:

Full application

Applicant:

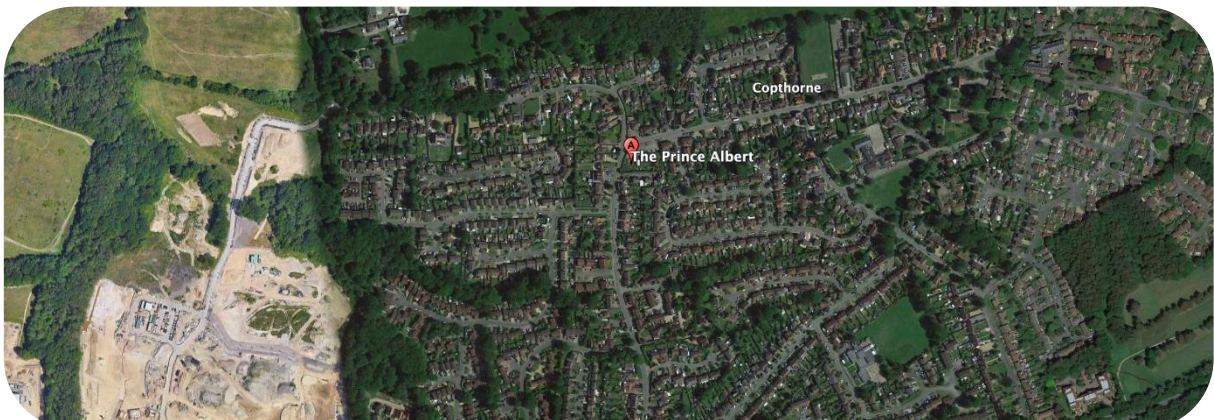
Westcoast Convenience Limited

Architect:

UAN Architecture

Date:

September 2024



Location Plan

2 Background

The Site and Surroundings

Site Area

0.25 ha

Use

Public House (Sui Generis) with associated car park and garden to the side / rear.

Built form

The application site comprises a detached two storey building which occupies a substantial corner plot at the junction of Copthorne Bank and Brookhill Road. The current building was constructed in C19 and has a simple traditional form with a pitched roof and render / painted brick exterior. To the east of the public house there is a storage container, which provides secure storage for the business. Behind the storage container there is a small timber smoking shelter.

Landscape

The public house benefits from a large pub garden to the rear. The garden is mainly laid to lawn and features a children's play park. Within the garden there is a silver birch tree, which would be felled to facilitate the proposed development.

Access

To the side of the public house is a large car park, which is accessed from Copthorne Bank. This is a private car park, which is for the sole use by patrons and staff of the public house. The site is located within walking distance of a range of services and facilities in Copthorne town centre.





Site Photos



Site Photos

Character Overview

The site is located within the historic core of Copthorne. The Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2031 explains that *"At the centre of Copthorne is its historic core. This primarily residential area has clusters of commercial activity along Copthorne Bank, Borers Arm Road and Church Road. It is interspersed with a number of historic buildings contributing to a rich sense of place"*. The immediate area has a suburban character of the area with a mix of residential and commercial premises. The buildings are typically two storey detached or semi-detached properties of varying architectural form, merit and materials.

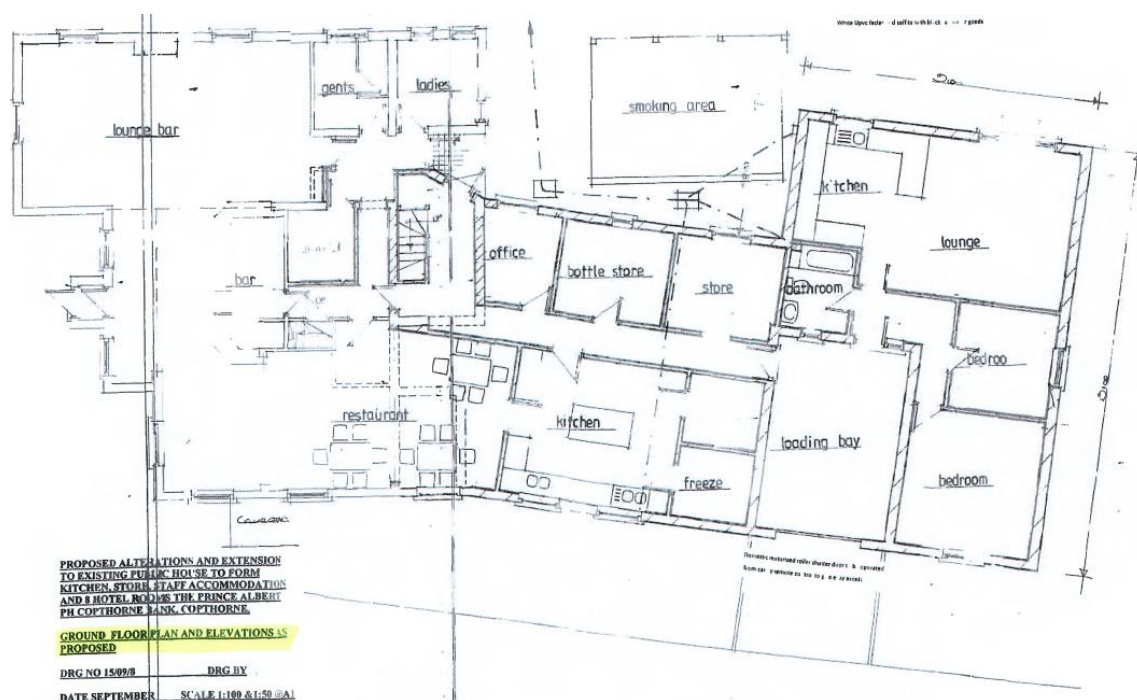


View of site from northeast
boundary

Planning History

Site History

- **TA/84/P/1115:** Single-storey extension to provide porch and enlarged bar area. **APPROVED** on 5th February 1985
- **06/02073/FUL:** Demolition of existing rear extension and erection of new extension for dining area and updated toilet facilities (incl disabled). **APPROVED** on 23rd November 2006
- **08/01522/FUL:** Retrospective planning application for a rain shelter. **APPROVED** on 7th July 2008
- **DM/15/4045:** Extension to existing public house to provide 8 no. letting rooms, extended kitchen and staff accommodation. Amended plans received 3rd December 2015 showing revised materials to elevation, revised window design and external fire escape on south elevation. **APPROVED** on 7th January 2016
- **DM/19/01314:** Proposed 2 storey rear extension with external staircase to provide 8 letting rooms with new kitchen, disabled toilet and staff accommodation. **APPROVED** on 26th April 2019.



Pre-Application Request – March 2024

(LPA Reference: DM/23/3242)

A pre-application request relating to the following development was submitted in December 2023 and a meeting held in January 2024. A written response was received in March 2024.

Erection of convenience store and 2 no. dwellings with associated works, including alterations to the existing vehicular access and car park. Existing public house to be retained with customer parking and a reduced pub garden area

In general, the pre-application advice pointed the applicant towards relevant policies which guide development in the district. In relation to the principal of the proposed development, the following was concluded:

- *Although the public house is being retained, the lack/ quality of retained garden space to use in connection with the pub combined with the proximity of the two new residential properties within the site, could adversely affect the commercial viability of the pub in the future with potential for increased noise complaints from new residents and lack of garden space in the summer months. It appears the pub currently make use of a storage container within the garden area which remains on the plans – this will further impact on the enjoyment of the garden and a more permanent facility should be included in any application. Any proposal should demonstrate the viability of the pub use and significance of the asset would not be adversely affected which would ultimately lead to its loss.*
- *The principle of both developments is acceptable in accordance with the above policies, owing to the site's sustainable location and the proposal forming windfall development in the built-up area.*

Planning Policy

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018)

- DP1 – Sustainable Economic Development
- DP2 – Town Centre Development
- DP3 – Village and Neighbourhood Centre Development
- DP4 – Housing
- DP5 – Planning to Meet Future Housing Need
- DP6 – Settlement Hierarchy
- DP14 – Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy
- DP21 – Transport
- DP25 – Community Facilities and Local Services
- DP26 – Character and Design
- DP27 – Dwelling Space Standards
- DP28 – Accessibility
- DP29 – Noise, Air and Light Pollution
- DP30 – Housing Mix
- DP39 – Sustainable Design and Construction

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2031 (February 2021)

- CNP1 – General Development Requirements
- CNP2 – Redevelopment and Infill Development within the Defined Built-Up Area
- CNP2 – CA4: Historic Core
- CNP6 – Assets of Community Value
- CNP14 – Our Economy
- CNP15 – Car Parking

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (November 2020)
- West Sussex County Council – Guidance on Parking at New Developments (September 2020)
- Planning Noise Advice Document: Sussex (September 2021)

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. It was submitted for examination in July 2024, no examination hearings have taken place at this point. At this stage the Local Planning Authority does not know which Policies will be the subject of unresolved objections and therefore only minimal weight can be given to the Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to the proposal:

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development:

- Paragraph 11 – *"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For **decision-taking** this means: (c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or (d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless: the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of this Framework taken as a whole."*

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes:

- Paragraph 60 – *"To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay."*
- Paragraph 70 – *"Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should: (d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes."*

Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy:

- Paragraph 85 – *“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development”*

Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities:

- Paragraph 97 – *“To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.”*

Section 11 – Making effective use of land:

- Paragraph 123 – *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.”*
- Paragraph 124 – *“Planning policies and decisions should: c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs”*

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places:

- Paragraph 133 – *“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”*
- Paragraph 135 – *“planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: (a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; (c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).”*

3 Description of Proposal

Use

It is proposed to sever the existing oversized pub garden to provide a convenience store (Use Class E) and a small block of 4 no. apartments (Use Class C3). The existing Public House use is to be retained save for a reduction in the amount of pub garden and number of parking spaces for use by patrons.

Copthorne is a Category 2 settlement under Local Plan Policy DP6 (Settlement hierarchy) and is defined as a "Larger village acting as Local Service Centres providing key services in the rural area of Mid Sussex. These settlements serve the wider hinterland and benefit from a good range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and access to public transport.". As such, the site is considered to be a sustainable location for both residential and retail development.

The pub itself is registered as an Asset of Community value (ACV) and as such, Local Plan Policy DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services and Neighbourhood Plan Policies CNP5 and CNP7 are of relevance. These policies seek to protect against the loss of the existing Public House.

Policy DP2 (Town Centre Development) seeks to create and maintain town and village centres. It sets a threshold for the provision of a Retail Impact Assessment for developments over 500sqm or more gross floorspace for the sale of convenience or comparison goods outside a town centre. The proposed convenience store will have a gross floorspace of 372sqm which is under this threshold.

Policy DP6 sets out that "Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design), and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement."

Policy CNP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan supports redevelopment and infill development of sites within the defined built up area subject to a number of criteria being met in relation to character, design and amenity.

Concern was raised at the pre-application stage with regards to how the proposals may impact upon the viability of the pub, this was in relation to the relationship between the proposed new dwellings and the pub and also the loss of the pub garden.

The proposed development has been amended in response to the pre-app feedback by replacing the houses with a small block of flats (this negates the need to provide private garden areas) and providing a bigger area of garden space for the pub. The shared boundary between the pub garden and flatted block will be planted with a line of new trees which will provide aural and visual screening between the domestic and commercial uses. In addition, the pub garden will be improved by the new owners to provide usable seating areas which will be a significant improvement upon what is seen on site now.

Whilst the existing garden is large, it is underutilised and lacks proper seating for it to be able to be used to its full potential. The money raised through the proposed development will see investment into the pub including the garden area, resulting in the viability and vitality of the pub improving.

Further, the relationship between the proposed new apartments and the pub is a common one. The layout (which will be discussed further in later sections) ensures the apartments are set away from the pub and as such there will be no amenity concerns with regards to noise. The application is supported by a noise impact assessment which demonstrates that the proposed development would provide suitable living conditions for occupiers of the proposed flats.

The principal of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable. This is in line with the pre-application advice received. The existing public house use is to be retained, the proposed 4 no. apartments are entirely appropriate in this sustainable location as supported by local policy and the proposed convenience store is of an appropriate size to support the existing population without impacting upon the viability of neighbouring retail centres.

Amount

The proposal seeks to retain the existing public house use, whilst providing a block of 4 no. apartments (2 x 1 bed and 2 x 2 bed) and a convenience store (372sqm).

The amount of development proposed has been driven by the desire to make effective use of this large underutilised site, whilst ensuring the existing public house use is protected, respecting the prevailing pattern of and the amenities of existing and future occupiers, as well as the following considerations:

- The need to make optimum use of the site;
- To provide a development of high-quality mixed-use design;
- The need to preserve existing and future neighbouring amenity;
- To provide good living conditions for occupiers;
- To provide an appropriate amount of car parking, cycle parking and suitable access standards;
- To provide adequate bin storage;
- To preserve trees and soft landscape.

Policy DP30 requires new development to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes that reflects current and future housing need. The SHMA 2021 sets out that the greatest need is for family housing, however, Policy DPH7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan states that the SHMA ranges should be used as a starting point and that variations to this required mix would be considered based on high-quality mixed-use factors including site characteristics and location that dictate that there is a more appropriate mix of dwellings. Whilst two dwellings were proposed at the pre-application stage, it is considered that apartments will be a more appropriate form of development on the site in order to make the most efficient use of the site. The proposed development and mix of residential units assists in providing a high-quality mixed-use development with appropriate space available for the public house, ample parking for all uses, a good-sized convenience store and appropriate amenity space for residential uses. As such, the proposed four smaller dwellings are appropriate in this context.

All residential units exceed the Government's nationally described space standards (2015) with shared amenity space.

The proposed convenience store will be 372sqm, this falls below the 500sqm threshold set out within Policy DP2 for the provision of a retail impact assessment. As such, the size of the proposed convenience store is wholly appropriate and will not impact upon the vitality of other centres.

The land provided to serve the existing public house use is considered to be ample in order to provide sufficient external space to serve this use. This position is supported by the viability report submitted with the planning application.

As can be seen from the accompanying plans, the amount of development proposed has been carefully balanced to create an attractive scheme that makes efficient use of the site, whilst not representing an overdevelopment of the site or creating an overbearing impact on the neighbouring properties.

The proposals therefore accord with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1, CNP2 CNP11 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



Proposed Site Plan

Layout

The layout of the scheme has been carefully thought out to make maximum use of the site whilst ensuring the existing Public House use is retained, the relationship between the public house and the new residential dwellings and convenience store is appropriate and sufficient space is given to soft landscaping and parking to provide a redevelopment that is in keeping with the surrounding area.

A good-sized rear garden to the south of the public house is proposed to be retained along with a structure for storage to be used in association with this use. An area of car parking providing for patrons is also retained to the east of the pub, albeit that most visitors to the pub are local residents who walk to the venue.

The convenience store is to be located to the south-east of the site. Parking and access is provided to the north of the site with an ample number of parking bays proposed and a delivery bay all accessed from Copthorne Bank. The convenience store use is set a good distance from the proposed apartments with the apartment parking area in between, in order to minimise any potential for noise impacts. A Noise Assessment is submitted to demonstrate that the proposed convenience store will not result in significant noise impacts on surrounding uses.

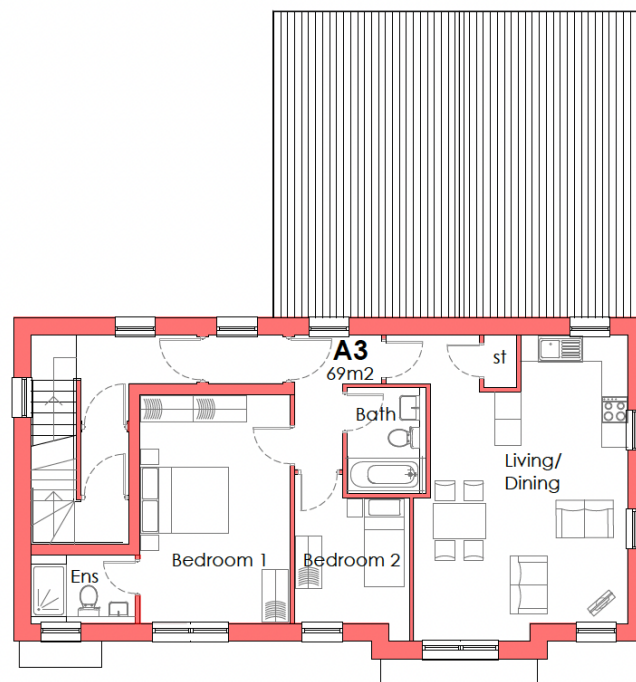
The proposed apartments are located to the south-west of the site, closest to the southern boundary. In order to ensure that amenity of future occupiers is preserved and there is no potential for noise or disturbance issues to be raised from future occupiers, vehicular access and a stairwell is proposed between the new apartments on the ground floor and the public house's garden. No windows are proposed to face into the pub's garden on any of the apartments except for those serving a stairwell and where possible, all habitable rooms are sited as far from the public house as possible. In accordance with paragraph 193 of the NPPF (Agent of Change Principal), the proposed layout will ensure that no undue restrictions are placed on the Public House as a result of the proposed development.

Shared external amenity space is proposed to the front and rear of the apartments and a parking court is proposed to the rear of the apartments (adjacent to the convenience store). The access is provided from Brookhill Road under the proposed apartment block.

Internally each of the proposed apartments has a good-sized kitchen / living room / dining area. The two bed apartments benefit from two bathrooms. The proposed design and layout ensures all properties are afforded a good level of natural light and good outlook.

The proposed layout ensures that the development meets all necessary requirements in terms of provision of amenity space, protection of amenity and provision of necessary parking whilst making efficient use of the site in a form that respects the character of the area.

In these respects, the layout would reflect, preserve and enhance the surrounding area in accordance with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1, CNP2 CNP11 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



Proposed First Floor Layout

Scale

The proposed development will increase the density of development on this underutilised site by introducing the proposed three storey apartment block and single storey convenience store.

The apartment block has been carefully designed to respond to the scale of development in the surrounding area. Whilst immediately to the south of the site the dwellings are single storey with accommodation in the roof, the majority of development surrounding the site is two storey. As such, the proposed apartments have been designed to appear as two storey with additional accommodation within the roof. It is considered that the proposed height is acceptable striking a balance between preserving the character of the area whilst making efficient use of the site. The separation distance between the proposed new apartments and neighbouring properties is sufficient to ensure there would be no concerns with regards to the development appearing overbearing nor with it impacting upon light.

The proposed convenience store will be a single storey building. It will be set back within the site, close to the boundary with the neighbours to the south. However, due to the single storey nature and its proposed flat roof, it will sit much lower than the properties that surround it and as such will not appear overly dominant or result in amenity concerns.

In these respects, the proposed scale and massing would reflect, preserve and enhance the surrounding area in accordance with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1, CNP2 and CNP11 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



Proposed Front (North) Elevation of
Convenience Store



Proposed Front (West) Elevation of
Apartments

Appearance

The appearance of the proposed development has been driven by the desire to ensure that the proposed building fits seamlessly into the established character of the area, whilst making effective use of the site to assist in delivering 4 x high quality new flatted dwellings and a convenience store.

As mentioned, the immediate area has a suburban character with a mix of residential and commercial premises. The buildings are typically two storey detached or semi-detached properties of varying architectural form, merit and materials.

The proposed apartments have been designed to mimic the traditional style of the majority of the dwellings surrounding the site and the public house building. The design assists in reducing the visual bulk of the properties by providing the third floor of accommodation in the roof. Further, the provision of three separate external doors to serve the four properties assists in giving the impression that the dwellings are independent dwellings rather than flats which is in keeping with the general character of the area.

The proposed materials include brick, render and hung tiles. This is appropriate and will assimilate well within the varied but traditional context of the area.

The single storey convenience store has been designed to a slightly more modern finish. The proposed vertical cladding will complement the traditional materials used within the surrounding area.

Given the above, the character and appearance of the area would be maintained, and a carefully designed proposal would be incorporated into the street scene without adversely affecting the local distinctiveness of the area. As such the development is in accordance with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1, CNP2 and CNP11 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



Proposed Northern Elevation of
Apartment

Landscaping

A large area of the site to the east of the Public House is laid to hardstanding with the southern half of the site mostly laid to lawn forming the pub's garden. When viewed from external vantage points the existing landscaping on the site is not considered to add significantly to the character of the area.

In order to facilitate development four existing trees, which lack any particular merit, will be removed. As shown on the proposed site plan, four new trees are proposed in order to replace these trees that will be lost. This was suggested at the pre-application stage and as such, is acceptable.

The proposed development will retain a number of areas of soft landscaping, particularly around the proposed apartments and also an area of garden to be used by the pub.

The proposals are in accordance with Policy DP37 and DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Biodiversity

The application has been supported by an Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Report prepared by LC Ecology. The report sets out that provided the proposed mitigation is put in place, there will be no significant effects on biodiversity as a result of the proposed development. BNG Credits will be required in order to achieve the mandatory 10% net gain. Accordingly, the proposal accords with Policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Drainage

The application has been supported by drainage strategy from CGS Civils, which ensures that surface water and foul outputs will be managed in an appropriate manner. Therefore, the proposal accords with Policy DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Access

It is proposed to retain the existing access from Copthorne Bank to serve the public house and the convenience store. A new access from Brookhill Road is proposed to serve the apartments. Additional hardstanding is proposed to the front of the convenience store in order to facilitate a policy compliant level of parking.

A transport statement has been provided by ADL Traffic & Highways. It sets out that there are no apparent road safety issues on the network near the site that would require mitigation as a result of the proposed development. The site is situated in a location of good accessibility to encourage active travel modes (walking and cycling) to / from the proposal site, whilst also benefiting from good accessibility to bus stops with relatively frequent services.

The major trip generator of the proposal is the convenience store, however, the majority of those trips will be existing on the network and accordingly incidental on the highway network. The additional trip generation is imperceptible when considering the prevailing traffic flows on the highway network.

The proposed development will provide 23 commercial parking spaces to serve the public house and convenience store and 6 to serve the residential units. Policy compliant bin and bike stores are also proposed.

The proposal accords with NPPF paragraph 114 and Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP14, CNP15 and CNP16 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4 Planning case

Principle of Development

- Policies DP25, CNP5 and CNP7: The proposals ensure the existing Public House use is retained and its viability will not be impacted as a result of the proposals. The proposed development has been designed to ensure that the new dwellings neighbouring the site will not result in unnecessary restrictions being placed on the businesses use due to amenity concerns and a good level of outdoor space has been set aside for use by the public house.
- Policy DP2: The proposed convenience store is of a sufficient size to serve the local community without impacting upon the prosperity of other services or local centres
- Policies DP6 and CNP2: The proposed development will see an efficient use being made of this underutilised site in a sustainable location within the settlement boundary.
- The principal of development for the proposed uses in this location is considered acceptable.

Impact on Character and Appearance of the area

- The proposed development has been carefully considered to ensure the character and appearance of the area is preserved. The convenience store is set well into the site and is of a modest design to complement the traditional character of development which surrounds the site. The proposed apartments have been designed to appear as a two-storey development with accommodation within the roof to reduce the visual bulk of the proposals.
- The apartments have a traditional design to assist in assimilating the units with surrounding development.
- The amount of development proposed on the site ensures it does not appear overcrowded and as such matches the prevailing density of the area.
- Where possible, areas of soft landscaping have been incorporated into the proposals to soften the overall visual appearance.
- The proposals accord with Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1, CNP2 and CNP11 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Residential Amenity – Neighbouring Residents

- The proposed new development has been designed to preserve the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, especially with regards to the residential dwellings to the south of the site. Ample separation is proposed between the new apartments and the neighbouring properties to the south to ensure the development does not appear overbearing. Minimal windows are proposed facing towards neighbours to the south, but where there is potential for overlooking these are proposed to be obscured.
- The design of the convenience store includes an acoustic fence in order to mitigate any potential impacts from the service area.
- The proposals accord with Policies DP26 and DP29 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1 and CNP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Residential Amenity – Future Residents

- The design has been carefully considered to ensure the relationship between the proposed apartments and the Public House is acceptable. The apartments have been designed to site the habitable rooms away from the Public House and its outside space and not significant windows are proposed to overlook the pub.
- This application has been supported by a noise impact assessment setting out that the noise levels at the proposed new dwellings will be appropriate.
- The proposals accord with Policies DP26 and DP29 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP1 and CNP2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Trees and Biodiversity

- BNG Credits will be purchased to achieve 10% BNG net gain.
- Whilst four trees are proposed to be removed in order to facilitate development, the proposed site plan shows four new trees proposed to mitigate this loss.
- The proposal accords with Policies DP37 & DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Parking and Highways

- The submitted Transport Statement sets out that the proposed development will not have a perceptible impact on highway movements and will not lead to highway safety concerns.
- A policy compliant level of car and cycle parking is proposed for all uses at the site.
- The proposals accord with Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policies CNP14, CNP15 and CNP16 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Waste and Recycling

- Appropriate bin storage will be provided within the site. It will meet all necessary policy requirements for capacity.

Conclusion

- As the proposal complies with the Development Plan and there are no material considerations which indicate that it should be determined otherwise, the applicant looks forward to receiving the support of Mid Sussex District Council for this application.