

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	
By	Head of Planning Services
Local Authority	Chichester District Council
Application Nos.	SDNP/17/01872/FUL and SDNP/17/01873/LIS
Applicant	Cowdray Estate
Application	Subdivision of a single 3-bedroom flat to create two 1-bedroom flats (inc. minor internal alterations).
Address	Flat 1 Snowhill House Easebourne Lane Easebourne GU29 0AE

Recommendation: That the applications be approved for the reasons set out in paragraph 10 of this report.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This application is liable for Community Infrastructure Levy.

Reason for Committee Referral: Parish Objection – Officer recommends Permit

Executive Summary

The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the subdivision of a 3 bedroom flat into two 1 bedroom flats. The property forms part of a larger building, which is also subdivided into flats and is grade II Listed. The site is located on the edge of Easebourne, just outside the Settlement Policy Area and within the Conservation Area. The site is located within a sustainable location close to amenities and public transport links. The conversion of the building to two 1 bedroom flats is considered acceptable, will meet an identified housing need, will not result in harm to the historic character and fabric of the listed building and will preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The use of the building as two flats will not harm the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. Parking provision will remain on site. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval.

1 Site Description

1.1 Snowhill House is a Grade II Listed building located within the Easebourne Conservation Area and the wider South Downs National Park. The Settlement Policy Area lies adjacent to the site. The building is set in a prominent position, elevated from the A272 and comprises of a stone façade under a tiled roof. The building is subdivided into four flats. The main part of the building is two storey with a single storey element attached to the side elevation. The application site forms part of one of the flats within the building and is the single storey part of the building immediately adjacent to the car parking area.

2 Proposal

2.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for the subdivision of Flat 1 into two one bedroom units. Listed building consent is also sought as the conversion requires some internal alterations to the building including the blocking up of the doorway between the two properties and the removal of an internal partition in flat one to create a kitchen area.

3 Relevant Planning History

3.1 12/00109/LBCNP Demolition of part and rebuilding of Listed Building seriously damaged in a fire . Permit

3.2 12/00613/FULNP Demolition and re-construction of existing residential building following a serious fire . Permit

3.3 SDNP/13/03650/FUL - Retrospective renewal/replacement of boundary fencing to Snowhill Flats, with close boarded fence. Refused

3.4 SDNP/14/05551/FUL - Retrospective erection of a new boundary fence with associated landscaping. Approved

3.5 SDNP/14/05552/LIS - Retrospective erection of a new boundary fence with associated landscaping. Approved

4 Consultations

4.1 Parish Council Consultee

The Parish Council object to this planning application as it considers there is a greater need in the village for family accommodation, rather than for single or couple occupation.

4.2 CDC - Rural Housing Officer

There is generally a lack of 1 bedroom properties in the district. The housing delivery team support the provision of 1 bedroom units, especially in rural areas where they are few and far between, as they are generally more affordable for first time buyers and they also provide an opportunity for older people wishing to down size. From a Housing Authority perspective we would not object.

5 Representations

5.1 No comments received

6 Planning Policy Context

6.1 Applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for this area is the **Chichester District Local Plan First Review (1999)**. The following documents are also material considerations in the determination of these applications:

- SDNPA Partnership Management Plan 2014
- South Downs Local Plan – Pre-Submission September 2017

The relevant policies to this application are set out in section 7, below.

6.2 National Park Purposes

The two statutory purposes of the SDNP designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage,
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

If there is a conflict between these two purposes, conservation takes precedence. There is also a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of the local community in pursuit of these purposes.

7 **Planning Policy**

7.1 Relevant Government Planning Policy and Guidance

Government policy relating to National Parks is set out in English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was issued and came into effect on 27 March 2012. The Circular and NPPF confirm that National Parks have the highest status of protection and the NPPF states at paragraph 115 that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the national parks and that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.

Section 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is also relevant to the determination of the application.

7.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The following sections and paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework have been considered in the assessment of this application:

- Section 7, 11 and 12
- Paragraphs 14, 17, 60, 61, 64 and 115

The development plan policies listed below have been assessed for their compliance with the NPPF and are considered to be compliant with the NPPF.

7.3 Chichester District Local Plan First Review 1999

The following policies of the **Chichester District Local Plan First Review (1999)** are relevant to this application:

- RE1 - Development in the Rural Area Generally
- RE14 - Conversions in the Rural Area
- BE11 - New Development
- BE12 - Alterations, Extensions and Conversions

- BE4 - Buildings of Architectural or Historic Merit
- BE5 - Alterations to Listed Buildings
- BE6 - Conservation Areas

7.4 The South Downs Local Plan - Pre-Submission 2017

The National Park Authority has published the South Downs Local Plan Pre-Submission 2017. This was approved by the South Downs National Park Authority on 11 July 2017. The document and the policies contained therein are a material consideration when determining planning applications and appeals within the National Park; however at this stage it is acknowledged that the policies will carry limited weight. The following policies are considered relevant to this application:

SD1 (Sustainable Development within the South Downs National Park)
 SD5 (Design)
 SD7 (Relative Tranquillity)
 SD9 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)
 SD12 (Historic Environment)
 SD13 (Listed Buildings)
 SD15 (Conservation Areas)
 SD26 (Supply of homes)

7.5 Partnership Management Plan

The South Downs Partnership Management Plan (SDPMP) was adopted on 3 December 2013. It sets out a Vision and long term Outcomes for the National Park, as well as 5 year Policies and a continually updated Delivery Framework. The SDPMP is a material consideration in planning applications and has some weight pending adoption of the SDNP Local Plan.

The following Policies and Outcomes are of particular relevance to this case:

- General Policy 1
- General Policy 9

8 **Planning Assessment**

The principle of the subdivision of the existing 3-bedroom flat into two 1-bedroom flats

8.1 Snowhill House is sited outside although adjacent to the Settlement Policy Area. Although the principle of a new residential unit of accommodation would not normally be considered acceptable, in this instance as the proposal is for the subdivision of an existing building and it is adjacent to the settlement policy area within a sustainable location, with bus stops, the A272 and being surrounded by residential development, the proposal in this particular circumstance is considered acceptable. This accords with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that 'housing applications should be considered in context in the favour of sustainable development' and Policy RE14 of the Chichester District Local Plan 1999 for the conversion of existing buildings as the building is structurally sound and worthy of conversion to two units of accommodation, no extensions are required for the use of the building, it will also ensure that the historic character and integrity of the listed building is preserved and the type and level of accommodation will not harm the surrounding area.

The impact of the alterations on the character and appearance of the listed building

8.2 The proposed changes to the building are considered to be acceptable and will not harm the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building. Externally the proposal does not require any alterations. Internally the alterations are considered to be acceptable and will not harm the historic integrity of the building; the partition wall in flat one is considered to be modern and its removal in this particular circumstance is considered acceptable. Discussions with the Historic Building Advisor have been undertaken and no objection has been received. The comments made by the Historic Building Advisor were that the door between flat one and two should remain in-situ as this will ensure that the historic character of the property is retained. The step should also remain between the proposed kitchen and sitting area for flat 1. The proposal therefore accords with Policy BE4 and BE5 of the Chichester District Local Plan 1999.

The impact on the surrounding area/Conservation Area

8.3 The proposed internal sub-division of the building would have no impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area. The building is already used as flats, therefore the car parking areas for the flats already exist, no external changes are proposed. The only exception to this is a bin and bicycle store, following negotiations with the agent these have been moved from the entrance to flat 1, so that they are not so visible from within the surrounding area, this also ensures that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced, in accordance with Policy BE6 of the Chichester District Local Plan 1999.

The impact on residential amenity

8.4 The proposed accommodation is essentially on the ground floor of the north western section of the building, part of which is single storey. The self-contained nature of the units to be created and degree of separation from the remaining units within the building will ensure that the proposal would not result in harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, or to the other flats within the building in particular. No external changes are proposed. The increase in vehicular movements on the site by creating an additional unit is not considered to result in harm to residential amenity.

Car Parking

8.5 Parking provision is proposed in the form of one car parking space for each flat. This is considered to be acceptable given that the site is located within a sustainable location and accords with the West Sussex County Council parking standards. The parking demand for 2, 1-bed flats (2 spaces) is the same as the existing provision for the larger 3 -bed unit. Therefore there would be no additional demand for parking over and above that currently provided and therefore will be no impact on car parking provision for other flats within the building.

Bin and bicycle storage

8.6 Bin and bicycle storage is proposed for both flats and this is considered acceptable. Details of the storage units will be required through imposition of a condition in the event that permission is granted.

Housing need

8.7 The Parish Council has objected in respect of the loss of family homes within the village. The Council's housing officer has been consulted and has advised that there is a housing need for smaller units within the district. The provision of 2 x one bed units would help meet this need and it is not therefore considered that the loss of the existing flat is objectionable.

9 Conclusion

9.1 The proposed subdivision of a 3- bedroom flat to create two 1-bed units of accommodation within this location is considered to be acceptable. The proposal would accord with Policy RE14 of the Chichester District Local Plan 1999 and given its location immediately adjacent to the settlement policy area and the amenities of Easebourne it would be located within a sustainable location. The applications are therefore recommended for approval.

10 Reason for Recommendation and Conditions

10.1 It is recommended that the application be approved for the reasons set out below.

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10.2 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)./ To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

10.3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans noted below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

10.4 The door between the flat one and flat two should remain insitu with the architrave and door retained.

Reason: to ensure that the historic character and integrity of the Listed building remains intact

10.5 The step between the kitchen and sitting room in flat one should remain in place.

Reason: to ensure that the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building remains intact.

10.6 Prior to the commencement of development on the site details of the cycle parking stores shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

10.7 Prior to the commencement of development on the site details of the bin stores shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that they do not harm the setting of the Grade II Listed Building and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

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10.8 3 year time expiry listed building

The works hereby consented shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the provision of Section 18(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

10.9 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans noted below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

10.10 The door between the flat one and flat two should remain insitu with the architrave and door retained.

Reason: to ensure that the historic character and integrity of the Listed building remains intact

10.11 The step between the kitchen and sitting room in flat one should remain in place.

Reason: to ensure that the historic character and integrity of the Listed Building remains intact.

10.12 Prior to the commencement of development on the site details of the cycle parking stores shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with current sustainable transport policies.

10.13 Prior to the commencement of development on the site details of the bin stores shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Reason: To ensure that they do not harm the setting of the Grade II Listed Building and preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

11. Crime and Disorder Implications

11.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

12. Human Rights Implications

12.1 This planning application has been considered in light of statute and case law and any interference with an individual's human rights is considered to be proportionate to the aims sought to be realised.

13. Equality Act 2010

13.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

14. Proactive Working

14.1 The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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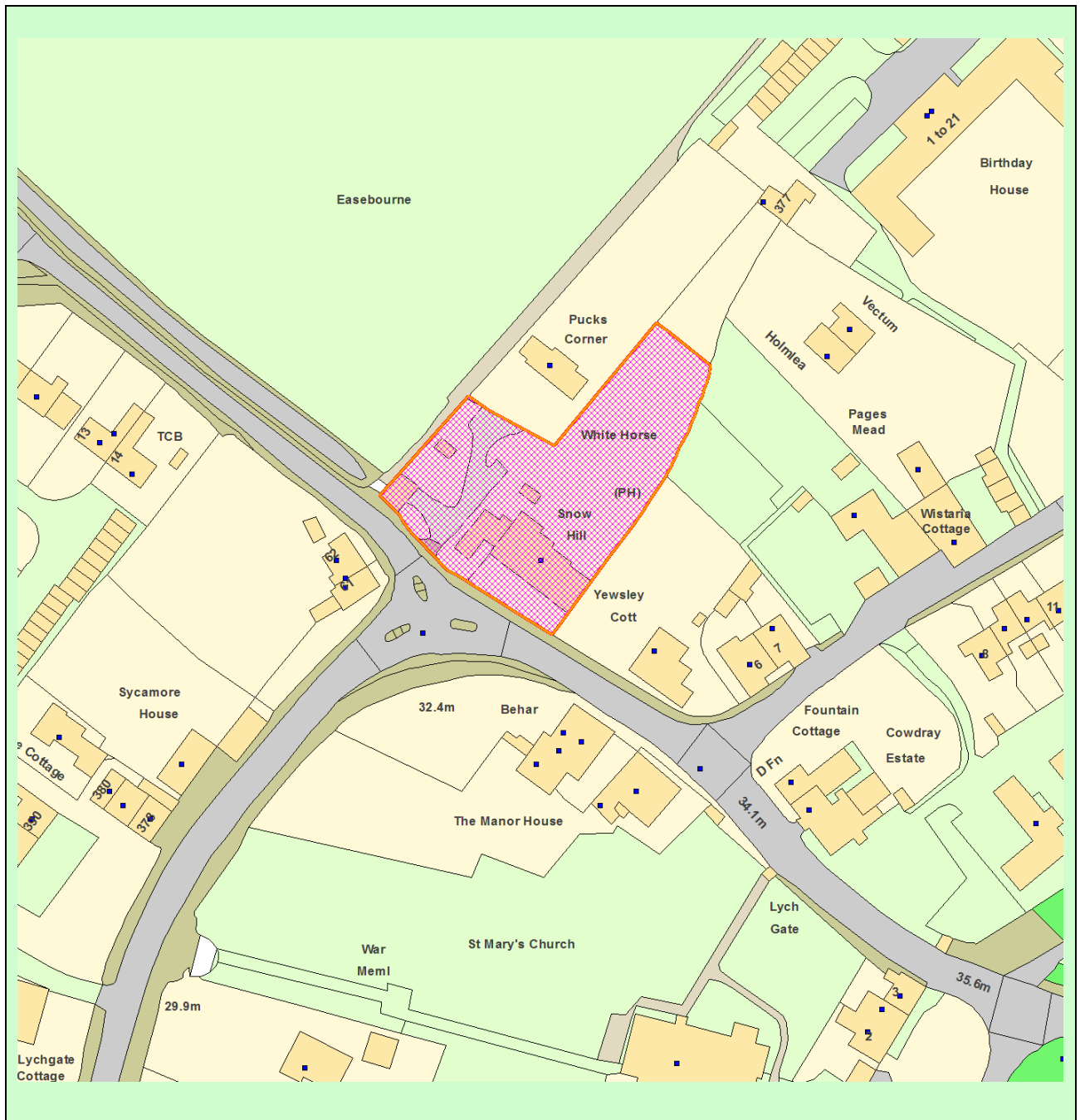
Appendices Appendix 1 - Site Location Map
Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

SDNPA Consultees CDC Historic Buildings Advisor, CDC Rural Enabling Officer

Background Documents CDCLPFR 1999 (saved policies), South Downs Local Plan Pre-submission Draft 2017, NPPF, NPPG, WSCC parking standards

Appendix 1

Site Location Map



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Appendix 2 – Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application

The application has been assessed and recommendation is made on the basis of the following plans and documents submitted:

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date on Plan	Status
Plans - Site Location Plan (A4)	1235 P 000		19.05.2017	Approved
Plans - Site Block Plan (A4)	1235 P 002		19.05.2017	Approved
Plans - Existing and Proposed Floor Plans (A3)	1258 L 001		19.05.2017	Approved

Reasons: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.