**DELEGATED REPORT**

Report considered and agreed by Team Manager, Planning Policy & Development Management:

……*Sarah Iles*……… Date: 8 January 2018

Report considered and agreed by Principal Planning Officer, Planning Policy & Development Management:

……*David Vickers*……………………………...Date: 2 January 2018

Report by: **Director of Communities, Economy and Transport**

Application No: **WD/3382/CC**

Proposal: **Retrospective planning permission for the installation of a canopy to the front entrance on the southern elevation, a storm porch to the rear of the building and the replacement of existing timber framed windows and doors with PVCu and powder coated aluminium doors.**

Site Address: **Hookstead, Goldsmiths Avenue, CROWBOROUGH, TN6 1RG**

Applicant: **Director of Adult Social Care, East Sussex County Council**

Key Issues: **1. Purpose of the development**

**2. Design and appearance**

Case Officer: **Ms Kiran Sajjan Tel. 01273 481595**

Local Member: **Councillor Sylvia Tidy**

**RESOLUTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT:**

**Under the powers delegated to me by the Governance Committee on 30 July 2003, I resolve to approve the proposal subject to the conditions set out in this recommendation.**

**CONSIDERATION OF RELEVANT PLANNING MATTERS:**

1. **The Site and Surroundings**

1.1 The application site is located to the west of Crowborough Town Centre within a predominantly residential area comprising detached properties and flats in Goldsmiths Avenue and Beacon Road. It is a corner plot that is effectively screened by mature trees to the east along the A26 Beacon Road and the south along Goldsmiths Avenue. The main vehicular and pedestrian entrance to the application site is from Goldsmiths Avenue.

1.2 Hookstead Resource Centre was built in the early 1970s and comprises a three storeys (plus basement) red brick building that occupies the western side of the site, including an extension eastwards. A detached bungalow is also present within the site to the north east of the main building.

1.3 The building is currently vacant with conversion and refurbishment works granted last year, under application reference WD/3333/CC, underway. The application site is within the development boundary for Crowborough as defined in the Wealden Local Plan 1998 and is also within 7 kilometres of the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

1. **The Proposal**

2.1 Retrospective planning permission is sought for the replacement of all windows from timber framed to PVCu and doors from timber to powder coated aluminium. All windows and doors that have been installed match the previous brown (rosewood) colour. This application also includes installation of a storm porch to the rear of the building on the eastern elevation and a canopy to the front entrance on the southern elevation to provide a sheltered outdoor area for visitors to the centre.

2.2 All works have already been carried out and therefore this application is entirely retrospective.

1. **Site History**

3.1 Hookstead Resources Centre has been subject of several planning applications in recent years. The most recent permission granted was for the change of use of the first and second floors from B1 office use to C2 residential institutional use, part ground floor between B1 office and D1 non-residential use and rear detached bungalow from B1 office use to C2 residential institutional use and revised car parking and hard landscaping works (ref. WD/3333/CC granted 20 September 2016).

1. **Consultations and Representations**
   1. Wealden District Council: Raises no objections.
   2. Crowborough Town Council: Raises no objections or comments.
   3. Local representations: None received.
2. **The Development Plan and other policies of relevance to this decision are:**

5.1 Wealden District (incorporating part of the South Downs National Park) Local Plan Core Strategy Adopted 2013: No policies of relevance to this application.

The Core Strategy is the key policy document setting out a strategic vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the area up to 2027. This Plan only replaces parts of the Wealden Local Plan 1998. Some policies from this earlier plan are still “saved” where they remain of relevance and until they are superseded by further Development Plan documents.

5.2 Wealden Local Plan 1998 Saved Policy: EN27 (Visual amenity).

Wealden District Council has not formally determined whether its Saved Policies in the Wealden Local Plan are in general conformity with the NPPF. The above referenced Saved Policies are considered by the County Planning Authority to be in general conformity with the overarching principles of the NPPF.

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

The NPPF does not change the status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making and constitutes guidance as a material consideration in determining planning applications. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Part 7 (Requiring good design) attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and requires planning authorities to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area.

1. **Considerations**

**Purpose of the development**

6.1 Hookstead Resource Centre is currently undergoing refurbishment works which were granted last year under application reference WD/3333/CC. These works are due to be completed in early 2018, with the building opening to the public shortly after. Alongside these works, a new canopy at the front entrance and a storm porch to the rear entrance have been installed and therefore require retrospective planning permission.

6.2 The applicant notes that the original windows had become defective and were not as efficient as they once were. To improve the efficiency of the windows, the original stained timber windows have been replaced with double-glazed timber effect PVCu windows to match the style of the existing as closely as possible. Additionally, the doors have been replaced with brown powder coated aluminium doors.

**Design and appearance**

6.3 Saved Policy EN27 of the Wealden Local Plan states that the scale, form, site coverage, density and design of the development and the use of materials and landscaping should respect the character of adjoining development, and where appropriate, promote local distinctiveness. The design, materials and landscaping should be of an appropriate high standard. It then goes on to state that the proposed development should not create an unacceptable adverse impact on the privacy and amenities of adjoining developments and the neighbourhood by reason of scale, height, form, noise and traffic movements.

6.4 The windows and doors match the original design in terms of colour and style closely and blend in with the design of the adjacent buildings (Conan Doyle Court) which has recently been sold by the County Council. The storm porch to the rear is in keeping with the brown rosewood colour of the windows and doors and the brick matches that of the original building. The canopy at the front entrance is finished in white. Although this doesn’t match the brown theme throughout the building, the white colour aids legibility, making the entrance of the building stand out from afar.

6.5 Views into the site are restricted from public viewpoints due to the mature tree screening along the southern and eastern boundaries. The property directly opposite the vehicular access off Goldsmiths Avenue has direct views of the entrance however views into the site are limited to this property. It is considered by the Landscape Architect that the replacement windows and doors are an enhancement to the original appearance as they now provide a more uniform and higher quality appearance to the building. It is therefore considered that the changes to the building have had a negligible but positive impact on the local landscape and have bettered the character and views.

6.6 The fenestration of the southern elevation has been altered as three windows have been partially blocked to accommodate kitchen facilities within the building. Where the openings have been partly blocked off, matching bricks to those used in the construction of the original building have been used and therefore this change is considered to be acceptable as the smaller windows blend in well.

6.7 Overall, the works undertaken are considered to be acceptable in terms of their design and appearance as the new windows, storm porch and canopy match the original style, colour and design of construction materials used throughout the building. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Saved Policy EN27 of the Wealden Local Plan 1998.

1. **Conclusion and reasons for approval**

7.1 In accordance with Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the decision on this application should be taken in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.2 Planning permission is sought for works undertaken at Hookstead Resource Centre. The proposal comprises the replacement of all windows and doors from stained timber to timber effect PVCu windows in the colour rosewood and brown powder coated aluminium doors. The proposal also includes the installation of a canopy outside the main entrance to provide a sheltered reception area and a storm porch to the rear access of the building. It is considered that the retrospective proposal accords with Saved Policy EN27 of the Wealden Local Plan and is supported in principle by the policies in the NPPF.

7.3 In determining this planning application, the County Council has worked with the agent in a positive and proactive manner. The Council has also sought views from consultees and neighbours and has considered these in preparing the recommendation. This approach has been taken positively and proactively in accordance with the requirement in the NPPF, and as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

7.4 There are no other material considerations and the decision should be taken in accordance with the Development Plan.

1. **Recommendation**
   1. To grant planning permission subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans and documents listed in the Schedule of Approved Plans.

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

Schedule of Approved Plans

Supporting information and access statement, Photographic Schedule, 010 Rev P2 - Location Plan, 011 Rev P1 - Block Plan, 014 - Window Detail Existing & Proposed, 015 - Door Detail Existing & Proposed, 032 - Proposed Rear Storm Porch Layout, 033 - Proposed Rear Storm Porch Elevations, 013 - Proposed Rear Storm Porch Location Plan Rev A, 004 - Existing & Proposed North Elevation Rev A, 001 - Existing & Proposed East Elevation Rev A , 002 - Existing & Proposed West Elevation Rev A , 003 - Existing & Proposed South Elevation Rev A

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

9 January 2018

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Application file WD/3382/CC

Planning permission WD/3333/CC

National Planning Policy Framework

Wealden Local Plan 1998

Wealden District Core Strategy 2013