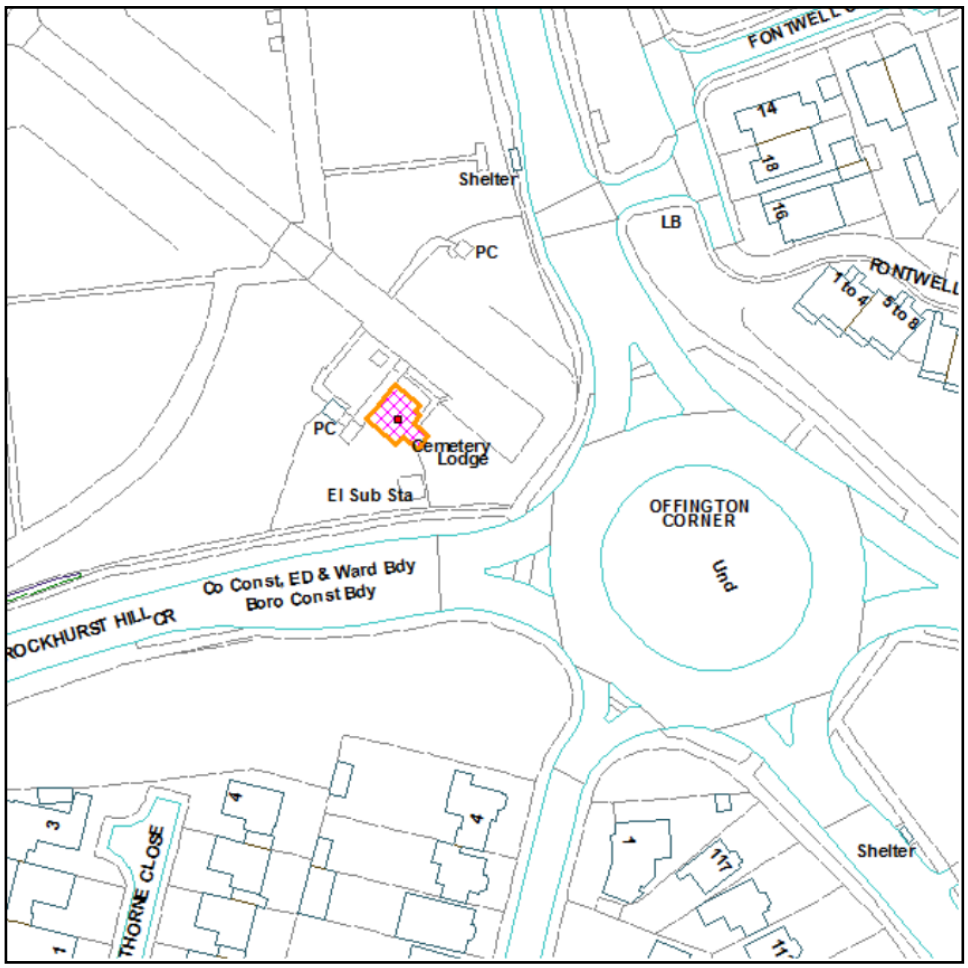
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| **Application Number:** | **AWDM/0840/25** | **Recommendation - GRANT permission subject to the expiry of the consultation period on 21 July** |
| | | |
| **Site:** | **Cemetery Lodge, Durrington Cemetery Findon Road, Worthing** | |
| | | |
| **Proposal:** | **Change of use of building Use Class E (display and sale of stone masonry) to carpentry and repair workshop.** | |
| | | |
| Applicant: | Mr Matthew Marchant, Adur & Worthing Councils | Ward: Offington |
| Agent: | N/A | |
| Case Officer: | Gary Peck | |




**Not to Scale**

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**Proposal, Site and Surroundings**

This application seeks permission to change the use of Cemetery Lodge from the display of stone masonry to use as a carpentry and repair shop. It is understood that the proposed user would be Men in Sheds, a form of community workshop, whose current lease at Northbrook College is about to end and therefore require new premises. Members may be aware that Men in Sheds also currently operate from a barn and garage at Lancing Manor.

The application site is to the south east corner of Durrington Cemetery and to the north west of the roundabout comprising the A27/A24 junction at Offington Corner. The subject building consists of an attractive 2 storey mainly flint faced building. Because of boundary vegetation and fencing, the building is only partly visible from outside of the cemetery and also some way distant from the nearest residential properties in Fontwell Road to the east (approximately 80 metres) and Goodwood Road to the south (approximately 65 metres) and in both cases separated by the busy A roads. To the north and west is the remainder of the Cemetery. The building is neither listed nor within a Conservation Area but is a Local Interest building. Its original use was as a dwelling before being occupied until 2005 by members of the crematorium and cemeteries' staff under service tenancies. It was used by an animal charity in the early 2010s.

To the south of the building is the Cemetery Arch which used to be part of the original entrance to the site from the roundabout, but access is now via Findon Road (A24) to the north.

**Relevant Planning History**

AWDM/1504/15: Change of use of ground floor from offices (Use Class B1) to retail (Use Class A1) for the sale and display of stone masonry - approved December 2015

10/0664/FULL: Change of use of the Lodge for use as an administration centre for local animal rescue charity (Wadars) - approved October 2010

**Consultations**

**Environmental Health:** No objection

**WSP (Drainage Consultant):** Recommend approval of the application

**Southern Water:** Wish to be made aware of any change in details of the proposed means of foul/surface water drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water. *Officer note - applicant has confirmed that no changes are proposed.*

Any further consultations will be reported verbally at the meeting

**Representations**

Any representations will be reported verbally at the meeting

## Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036:
DM5 Quality of the Built Environment; DM8 Planning for sustainable communities / community facilities; DM10 Economic growth and skills

## Relevant Legislation

The Committee should consider the planning application in accordance with:

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Regard shall be given to relevant development plan policies, any relevant local finance considerations, and other material considerations

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that requires the decision to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## Planning Assessment

The main issues in the determination of the application are whether the proposed use is acceptable in principle and the effect of the proposal upon the character and amenities of the surrounding area.

The building has had periods of vacancy in the past and since the stopping up of the original entrance rather sits to the periphery of the wider cemetery. Accordingly, permission has twice been given in the past for alternative uses and as such the principle of development can be said to have been established by those permissions.

Previous planning assessments have noted that a key factor in considering possible alternative uses of the building has been the sensitivity of the location of the building within the Cemetery. A number of commercial activities could be considered unsuitable, and certainly any proposed use should be relatively low key.

The 2010 permission for an animal charity was granted because the charity in question provided a local service of recognisable benefit to the community. The stated aim of the Men in Sheds organisation is to encourage people to come together to make, repair and repurpose, supporting projects in their local communities to improve wellbeing, reduce loneliness, and combat social isolation. As such, therefore, it would appear that the proposed user is appropriate for this sensitive location and no objection is therefore raised in principle.

Given the location of the building, there would be a need to impose some restrictive conditions, most particularly ensuring that activities take place within the existing building (a similar condition was imposed previously upon the stonemason use approved in 2015).

No external alterations are proposed and hence there would be no adverse impact upon the visual character of the building.

It is not anticipated that the intensity of the use of the building would be materially different to those previously granted permissions, nor would it appear to represent a material increase in visitors who would come to the cemetery in any case. As the nearest residential properties are some way metres distant to the south and east of the busy Offington Corner roundabout, it is not considered that there would be an adverse impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring residential properties.

Comments from the Highways Authority are awaited, but there is a parking area in front of the building that would appear capable of meeting any requirements arising out of the proposed use.

As this report is being prepared prior to the expiry of the consultation period, it may be necessary to impose further conditions beyond those listed below as a result from comments from consultees, but for the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposal would be a suitable re-use of the building for an appropriate community use and accordingly it is recommended that permission be granted

**Recommendation**

**APPROVE**, **subject to the expiry of the consultation period on 21 July and consideration under delegated authority, of any additional responses received.**

**Subject to Conditions:-**

1. Approved Plans

2. Full Permission

3. No raw materials, finished or unfinished products or items for sale, nor any other items shall be stacked, stored or displayed on the site except inside the Lodge building or within an enclosed storage area approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
   Reason: In the interests of visual amenity having regard to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan

4. The buildings shall not be used except between the hours of 8am-5pm Monday-Saturdays. There shall be no use of machinery or dispatch of deliveries at the premises except between the hours of 9am and 4pm on Mondays to Saturdays inclusive. The buildings shall not be used at any time on Sundays or Public Holidays.
   Reason: In the interests of amenity having regard to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan

5. The premises shall be used as a workshop Class E(g) (iii), for storage (Class B8) and as a meeting place for the local community (Class F2(b)) as set out in the application and for no other purpose within Class E, F or B8 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (or in any provision equivalent to that class in any Statutory Instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to consider any subsequent changes to the use of the site by way of an application given the sensitive use of the wider site

6. No retail sales shall take place from the buildings at any time.
Reason: Retail sales are not considered to be appropriate given the wider use of the site.

Any other appropriate conditions