

Dear Planning Officer,

Re: Planning Application AWDM/0396/26 – Demolition of existing buildings and construction of a three-storey building comprising 27 one-bedroom apartments, secure cycle and bin storage, hard and soft landscaping and associated works

I wish to formally object to the above planning application.

My objections are based on the significant adverse impact the proposal would have on neighbouring properties, highway safety, the Conservation Area, the continued operation of an established local business and the overall quality of the development.

1. LOSS OF SUNLIGHT, DAYLIGHT, OUTLOOK & PRIVACY

This proposal represents a substantial increase in the footprint and massing compared with previous schemes for the site.

The earlier proposal was set further back from neighbouring buildings, recognising the importance of protecting existing occupiers. This application removes that separation and instead wraps a three-storey building around the existing property at 22 Marine Place.

Craig Construction Services **STRONGLY OBJECTED** to the previous application for 9 homes on this site proposed by Star Properties, due to the 'inter relationship' on Craig Construction Services' Debenhams development however their new proposal is much more intrusive and ignores their own objections.

Just Yoga has occupied 22 Marine Place continuously for over 30 years. The proposed building would stand less than two metres from our south-facing windows, creating an almost continuous wall to the south and east.

The consequences would include:

- significant loss of direct sunlight throughout the day;
- substantial reduction in natural daylight;
- loss of outlook from existing windows;
- increased overlooking and loss of privacy;
- increased noise from residents immediately adjacent to the studio;
- cigarette smoke and vaping entering directly through open windows due to the absence of any designated external smoking area.

The afternoon sunlight reaching our premises has already been reduced by the neighbouring Debenhams redevelopment. This proposal would remove much of the remaining sunlight.

The submitted drawings fail to accurately represent the existing situation because they:

- omit the yoga studio windows;
- fail to show the adjoining single-storey structure which currently allows daylight into the building;
- do not provide a realistic illustration of the relationship between the existing and proposed buildings.

This means the true impact upon neighbouring occupiers has not been properly illustrated.

The Council should require the applicant to provide a comprehensive BRE Daylight and Sunlight Assessment demonstrating that all neighbouring properties satisfy the recognised Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance. If this assessment has already been submitted, I ask that it be independently scrutinised, as I do not believe the impact on 22 Marine Place has been properly assessed.

2. RIGHTS TO LIGHT

Just Yoga has occupied these premises for more than three decades and the affected windows have received uninterrupted natural light throughout that period.

While Rights to Light are ultimately a civil matter, they are directly relevant to understanding the practical impact of this proposal upon neighbouring occupiers. The Council should recognise that these windows have served the building continuously for well in excess of twenty years and that the loss of light is therefore particularly significant.

I would specifically request the planning officer to carry out a site visit from inside Just Yoga before determining the application.

3. IMPACT ON A HISTORIC BUILDING

22 Marine Place is one of the older buildings within this part of Worthing.

Its traditional construction, including bungaroosh walls, depends upon natural ventilation and sunlight to help control damp and moisture.

The northern side of the building already suffers from damp due to the adjacent sloping access. Further restricting sunlight and airflow is likely to worsen these long-standing problems, potentially causing additional deterioration to the historic fabric.

This impact has not been adequately addressed within the application.

4. CONSERVATION AREA

I question whether this proposal preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as required by planning legislation.

There have been numerous substantial residential developments within this part of Worthing over recent years. While each application may be considered individually, the cumulative impact is steadily eroding the historic character of Marine Place.

Rather than respecting neighbouring buildings, this proposal would dominate one of the oldest remaining properties within the street.

5. HIGHWAY SAFETY AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Marine Place already experiences significant congestion. Delivery vehicles frequently stop on the pavement because the carriageway is constrained, often preventing safe pedestrian movement.

The pavement outside the site is exceptionally narrow.

It is already difficult for wheelchair users, mobility scooters, pushchairs and pedestrians to pass safely. Two people cannot pass each other without stepping into the road.

I have personally witnessed dangerous situations involving fast-moving traffic, and both I and my clients have experienced near misses while leaving the yoga studio.

I previously requested a protective bollard to improve pedestrian safety but was informed this could not be provided because the pavement was too narrow.

Adding approximately 27 further households (on top of the 80+ households in Debenhams), together with visitors, deliveries and servicing vehicles, will inevitably increase pedestrian movements on infrastructure that is already inadequate.

The previous scheme proposed a wider pavement and building line set further back, creating a safer and more attractive streetscape.

This application represents a clear regression.

6. FIRE SAFETY

For more than thirty years the established emergency escape route from the yoga studio has been via the rear window into the rear alley. The submitted plans appear to obstruct this escape route.

Before determining this application, the Council should require confirmation that all existing means of escape remain available and that the proposal satisfies current fire safety requirements.

7. CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Recent developments have already caused significant disruption to my business. Road closures have reduced customer access and resulted in loss of income. Noise and yoga are not compatible causing class closures / reduced student attendance significantly during the daytime. I am unable to work in my office due to noise.

Despite assurances from the site manager that compensation would be considered in relation to the Debenhams development, these commitments were subsequently withdrawn.

Whilst construction impacts may be temporary, the Council should consider the cumulative effect of repeated major developments upon long-established independent businesses operating within the town centre.

8. QUALITY OF ACCOMMODATION

The Council should also consider whether the proposed apartments will provide a genuinely high standard of living for future residents. The proximity of the building to neighbouring properties, the limited separation distances and the constrained nature of the site raise concerns that the scheme represents an overdevelopment designed to maximise the number of units rather than create a high-quality residential environment.

The National Planning Policy Framework places emphasis on achieving well-designed places that provide a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users. In my view, this proposal fails to achieve that objective.

9. PLANNING BALANCE

Worthing undoubtedly requires additional housing, and I support appropriate development.

However, new housing should not come at the expense of existing residents, local businesses, historic buildings or pedestrian safety.

A less intensive scheme with greater separation distances, improved pavement widths and meaningful landscaping could provide much-needed homes while respecting its surroundings.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set out above, I respectfully request that planning permission be refused.

The proposal would result in:

- unacceptable loss of daylight and sunlight;

- loss of privacy and outlook;
- harm to an established business;
- potential deterioration of an historic building;
- failure to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area;
- increased highway and pedestrian safety risks;
- possible obstruction of an established fire escape;
- overdevelopment of a constrained site;
- poor living conditions for both existing neighbours and future residents.

I also request that, should officers be minded to recommend approval, the application is referred to Planning Committee so that these concerns can be fully debated in public.

Yours faithfully,
Melanie Palmer