Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1021/25 Recommendation: Approve

Site: 31 Graham Road, Worthing

Proposal: Loft conversion with rear dormer and front rooflights

Last visited: 29.04.2025

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N Site notice posted 14.08.2025

Site and Surroundings

The application site relates to a mid-terrace two storey dwelling located on the west side of Graham Road. There is a pedestrian access in Crescent Road to the west which provides access to a twitten at the rear of the terrace.

The site is within the Montague Street Conservation Area and Nos. 3 to 33 in the terrace are identified as local interest buildings and as a positive contributor to the conservation area.

Proposal

Permission is sought for roof extensions comprising of a dormer extension to the main rear roofslope and two conservation style rooflight windows to the front roofslope. This is a revised application following refusal of AWDM/1021/25 which included a rear and side dormer extension as a wraparound L-shaped design.

The application has been revised during the course of the application and the proposed dormer extension, as amended, would measure approximately 2.3 metres in width, 2.9 metres in depth and 1.7 metres in height. It would be finished in tile hanging. Matching materials are indicated.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/0424/25 Rooms in roof consisting of rear and outrigger dormers and front rooflights. Refused 22.05.2025

Consultations:

Worthing Society – no comments received.
The Worthing Society confirmed no objection in relation to the previous application AWDM/0424/25.

Representations:
None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM20, DM24
National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' (WBC)
Montague Street Conservation Area Appraisal

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area. The key considerations are the effects on the visual and residential amenities of the locality and the impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The application is considered in the context of the previous application AWDM/0424/25 which was refused for the following reasons:

01. The proposed development would, by reason of its scale, form, and design, represent a dominant, unsympathetic and overbearing form of development, detrimental to the visual amenities of the site and would detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area. As such the proposed development would be contrary to policies DM5 and DM24 of the Worthing Local Plan, the SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework.

02. Having regard to the scale and positioning of the proposed roof extension, the proposed development would be overbearing and unneighbourly, detrimental to the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers. As such the proposed development would be contrary to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Visual Amenity and impact on the character of the conservation area

The NPPF states that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.' The NPPG advises that significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Policy DM24 of the Worthing Local Plan requires that:

a) Where development affecting any designated or undesignated heritage asset is permitted, it must be of a high quality, respecting its context and demonstrating a strong sense of place.

b) Proposed development should take account of the information and guidance in Worthing's Conservation and Heritage Guide (which will be updated and periodically reviewed).

Designated Heritage Assets

c) Development should not adversely affect heritage assets or its setting (including important views that contribute to its setting). Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, the Council will refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. Where proposals may result in harm to a designated asset a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) must be submitted describing the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

d) Planning permission and/or Listed Building consent will only be granted provided that the appearance, significance, or historic character of the Listed Building is not adversely affected. The reinstatement or replication of original features such as windows or doors will be supported. Materials used must be consistent with those originally used or typical of the locality. Change of use may be supported where this secures the retention of a building of historic architectural interest where it could otherwise be lost.

e) Development in Conservation Areas will be required to be of a high standard of design and materials so as to respect, preserve and enhance the character and appearance of that area, and preserve important features. Conservation Area Character Appraisals will be used to assess applications within designated Conservation Areas and opportunities will be taken to preserve and enhance these areas, and to implement the recommendations of Conservation Area Management Plans. The importance to the local area of Buildings of Local Interest within Conservation Areas will be a material consideration in assessing an application for their demolition or development. Where, in compelling circumstances, the Council is minded to grant permission for demolition of a building in a Conservation Area, this shall not be granted until detailed plans for redevelopment have been approved.

In relation to undesignated heritage assets including Buildings of Local Interest, Policy DM24 states that:

They have been identified for their contribution to the character of the area in which they are located as set out in Worthing's Conservation and Heritage Guide. Their importance to the local area and community will be considered, and account will be taken of the desirability to sustain and enhance their significance. Development proposals should respect, support, and where possible, positively contribute to the essential character of these heritage assets. Other buildings and features of design and architectural interest not included above may also be considered undesignated heritage assets and therefore will also be subject to these requirements. Where a development would result in harm to an undesignated asset, a balanced judgement

will be made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. A HIA will be necessary to inform the decision.

Chapter 12 of the NPPF sets out the policies to achieve well-designed places. In paragraph 131, it advises that '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.'

The NPPF emphasises securing high quality design that (amongst other things): is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; is sympathetic to local character and history; maintains a strong sense of place using the arrangement of streets, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live; and, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users (paragraph 135), and that permission should be refused for development that is not well designed, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies or government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes (paragraph 139).

Policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan requires that:

All new development (including extensions, residential annexes, alterations, ancillary development, change of use and intensification) should:

i) be of a high architectural and design quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area. This will include consideration of proportion, form, design, context, massing, siting, layout, density, height, size, scale, materials, detailed design features and landscaping;

ii) enhance the local environment by way of its appearance and character, with particular attention being paid to the architectural form, height, materials, density, scale, orientation, landscaping, tree canopy, impact on street scene and layout of the development;

iii) make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of an area;

iv) respect, preserve and where appropriate enhance, heritage assets and settings;

v) be well built, accessible, fit for purpose, and adaptable to changing lifestyle, demography and climate;

vi) include a layout and design which: take account of potential users of the site; create safe conditions for access, egress and active travel (walking and cycling) between all locations; provide good links to integrated public

transport; and have acceptable parking arrangements (in terms of amount and layout);

vii) make a positive contribution to creating a safe and secure environment by integrating measures for security and designing out opportunities for crime;

viii) not have an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties, particularly of residential dwellings, including unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight/sunlight, outlook, an unacceptable increase in noise giving rise in significant adverse impacts, or vehicular movements resulting in severe cumulative impacts on the road network, or loss of important open space of public value (unless it satisfies any of the exceptions set out under Policy DM7 – Open Space, Recreation and Leisure);

ix) respect the existing natural features of the site, including landform, trees and biodiversity and contribute positively to biodiversity net gain. Where appropriate, this will include the protection and integration of existing trees and green infrastructure into new developments;

x) ensure that lighting incorporated into developments provides the minimum for public safety, is energy efficient and avoids light pollution.

The Council's SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' provides general advice and sets out a number of design principles. It states that:

When designing an extension and deciding on an appropriate siting, the two most important things to ensure are; that the design of your extension achieves an appropriate relationship with the design of the existing house and; that it also takes into account any impact on the street scene.

It goes on to say that: *The size and shape of any extension should normally be designed to ensure the original house remains the larger and more dominant feature.*

In relation to roof extensions and dormers it states that:

Roof extensions and dormers are often highly visible and alien features which greatly alter the appearance of a dwelling. Therefore, there is a normal presumption against dormer windows that are visible from the street. However, exceptions to this can be made if the dormer is located at the rear of the property to make it less visible, or if several other dwellings on the street already have dormer windows, which are not substantially out of character.

Dormers should never be allowed to dominate the roof by being overly large or higher than the existing roof ridge. Where possible they should be designed to follow the vertical lines of existing windows. Always, avoid wrapping dormers around more than one face of the roof, or cutting into the line of the hip.

Hipped roof or gable ended dormers are often preferable to those with flat roofs, because they reduce the overall "bulk" of the extension. This also avoids the horizontal emphasis that is produced by large flat roofed dormers. In some cases a roof light may

form a more suitable alternative to a dormer. Whilst the windows themselves should match those of the existing building, the roofs and sides of new dormers should be covered in materials which match or compliment the main roof.

The site is within an attractive terrace within the conservation area, designed with matching detailing, mouldings, and many retaining timber sash windows including at the application site. The Montague Street Conservation Area Appraisal states:

The only section of Graham Road within the Conservation Area is the two storey 19th century terrace formed by Nos. 3 to 39 on the west side. This terrace has considerable local historic and architectural interest. The remaining Victorian properties in the street, however, are important for setting the context and establishing the character of the street scene. Characteristic Victorian features largely remain intact. Residential use remains often in single family occupation and the closure of the south end of the road to vehicles ensures that there is relatively little traffic or parking in the narrow street. Graham Road is a quiet residential street adjoining the town's main shopping street.

Architectural historic and townscape elements which should be preserved:
• Two storey terraced properties built on a common building line.
• Stucco elevations with detailing including a plain band bracketed eaves and plaster mouldings to window and door openings.
• Ground floor cant bays with sliding timber sash windows, three lights at first floor featuring slender glazing bars and horn details.
• Recessed doorways with blind window recess above.
• Original front boundary walls and piers in the balustrade form.

Although the proposed roof extension would be at the rear of the building, the spacing between buildings in Crescent Road does allow some views towards the rear roofslope where the proposed development would be visible. This part of Crescent Road is also within the Montague Street Conservation Area.

The scale of the roof extension has been reduced since the previous application, where it is no longer proposed as a wrap-around design and relates solely to the rear roofslope. As originally submitted, whilst the size of the proposed rear dormer was reduced slightly to include a set back from the edge of the roofslope, therefore reducing some of the bulk to the rear roof extension, it was designed to extend across the full width of the roof and would appear as a relatively bulky and top-heavy addition in relation to the recipient building.

Whilst it is acknowledged that there are other examples of roof extensions at the rear of this terrace, the dormer at the neighbouring dwelling at No.33 is both smaller and less visible from the vantage point in Crescent Road. There are also traditional pitched roof dormers on the front elevation of No's 30 and 32 Crescent Road visible from the same vantage point. There are other dormer extensions at the rear of No.21 (WB/01169/FULL refers) and No.23 (no relevant planning history) Graham Road within this terrace which are similar to the application proposals as originally submitted in terms of bulk, but these are not readily visible from a public vantage point.

In view of these concerns the applicant has agreed to reduce the width of the dormer by approximately half and setting it back further from the front edge of the roofslope

and from its ridge. Its width would be similar to the neighbouring dormer window at the rear of No.33 although it would be deeper and with a smaller window set within. A further revision has reduced the depth further and altered the design extent of glazing.

Having regard to its positioning at the rear of the terrace and the existence of other dormer windows within the terrace, particularly the neighbouring dormer which is comparable in size and design, on balance it is considered that the revised proposals would be reasonably sympathetic in scale and design and would not cause any significant harm to the visual amenities of the site nor harm the character and special qualities of the conservation area in this instance.
In relation to the front rooflights, these are not a feature of this particular terrace and those proposed would create a more cluttered appearance to the roofscape, although it is noted that the current application stipulates that these would be conservation style rooflights. No Article 4 direction exists for the terrace and as was the case with the previous application it is noted that similar rooflights could be installed as Permitted Development.

Subject to the use of matching materials, design and impact on the visual amenities of the site and the wider conservation area is considered acceptable.

Residential Amenity

The main impact as a result of the proposals would be to the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings at No.33 to the north, No.29 to the south and neighbouring dwellings in Crescent Road to the rear of the site.

Dwellings on the opposite side of Graham Road would be sufficiently separated to avoid any significant impact given the scope of work relates solely to rooflight windows on the front elevation, and the relationship would be similar to that between existing front windows.

The extent of the proposed dormer has been reduced considerably in the current application and would be solely to the rear roofslope where the scale and bulk of the proposed addition would not cause any significant impact to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and would overcome the previous reasons for refusal.

Given the relationship with neighbouring dwellings there would be no significant loss of privacy arising from the proposals.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Matching materials

Informative

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.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Rebekah Hincke Date: 17.12.2025

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 17/12/2025