

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0475/26

Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 34 Bellview Road Worthing West Sussex BN13 1HA

Proposal: Change of use from Use Class C4 (small house in multiple occupation) to a sui generis house in multiple occupation

Date of Site Visit: 08.05.2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a mid-late C20, 2-storey, end-of-terrace house located on the east side of Bellview Road, within an established residential suburb of the town. The dwelling has previously been enlarged by a 2-storey side extension and a single-storey rear extension. The north side of the house adjoins a shared driveway serving 2no double-width, open-fronted garage/car ports at its eastern end. The property is currently in use as a small HMO (Class C4) consisting of 2 bedrooms plus a living room, separate kitchen, WC on the ground-floor, and 4no bedrooms plus shower room and bathroom on the first-floor.

There is 1no parking space provided on the paved site frontage, with the remainder of the open-plan front garden grassed (overgrown). A large, pitched-roof shed/garden building occupies the rear part of the modest-sized rear garden.

The attached mid-terrace house to the south (No.32) has been enlarged at the rear by a modest conservatory.

No.36 adjoins the north side of the shared driveway. Along with the attached half of the pair, it sits deeper in its plot than No.34 with a comparatively deeper front garden. It has also been enlarged by a 2-storey side extension, but only to the front half of the house.

Thomas A Becket Infant School adjoins the site to the rear (east).

The site is not listed or locally listed, and is not within a conservation area. There are no TPO trees on the site.

Proposal

The application, which has been amended, seeks permission for a change of use to a large HMO (sui generis).

As initially submitted, the layout proposed 8no bedrooms but has since been amended to 7no bedrooms with the additional bedroom formed from the existing kitchen, and the existing living room altered to provide a combined kitchen/dining/living area. As amended, no external alterations are now proposed.

Relevant Planning History:

WB/02/00682/FULL- Two Storey Side Extension.

STATUS: Permitted 16.08.2002.

Consultations

WSCC: The Local Highway Authority has raised no objection in principle, commenting:

“The site is located on Bellview Road, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

There are no proposed changes to the existing vehicular access arrangement. The addition of a seventh HMO bedroom is not anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of use.

The site will retain one car parking space; the LHA would expect at least three car parking spaces to serve an HMO of this size under WSCC Parking Standards. Therefore, some car parking may need to be accommodated on-street.

Whilst on-street parking is limited in the immediate vicinity, there are comprehensive parking restrictions in place prohibiting vehicles from parking in places that would be a detriment to highway safety. The LHA does not anticipate that the shortfall in car parking provision would result in a detrimental highway safety impact, nor give rise to a parking capacity issue. However, the LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts on on-street parking from an amenity point of view. Weight is given to the fact the site is situated within a sustainable location, within walking distance of public transport links.

No details have been given regarding cycle parking. The LHA would request that secure and covered cycle storage be provided if there is space within the site, to promote sustainable travel.

In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in ‘severe’ cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.”

Sussex Police: No comments received.

Environmental Protection, Environmental Health & Licensing: No adverse comments.

Environmental Health Private Sector Housing: No objection in principle from a licensing point of view, although worth pointing out that the [existing Bedroom 1] at 6.5M2 is less than the minimum 6.54sqm allowable.

WSP: The Council's surface water drainage consultant has no objection.

Neighbour Representations: Two representations have been received from the immediate neighbours on either side, raising concerns summarised as follows: -

- Constant turnover of residents at the property;
- Children playing in garden exposed to antisocial behaviour;
- Noise disturbance from comings and goings affecting sleep;
- Overloaded refuse bins;
- Insufficient parking provision;
- Concerned about noise transmission through internal walls (especially concerning the position of new kitchen);
- We were not consulted when the previous works were carried out.

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, SS1, DM1, DM2, DM5, DM15, DM22

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

Principle of Development

The presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of NPPF. For decision making this means approving proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Local Plan policy SS1 sets out a total housing supply figure of 3,672, equating to an annual target of 230 dwellings per annum. This is a 'capacity-based' figure based on the level of housing that can be delivered having regard to identified constraints and development capacity. However, it is recognised that this target rate for delivery will fall significantly below the level of housing need in the Borough of 14,160 dwellings over the Plan period.

Policy DM1(a) states that in order to deliver sustainable, mixed and balanced communities, the Council will expect all applications for new housing to consider the most up-to-date evidence of housing needs and demands to help determine the most appropriate housing mix based on the character and

location of the individual site. Policy DM1(c) states that housing developments should provide flexible, socially inclusive and adaptable development to help meet the diverse needs of the community and the changing needs of occupants over time.

The supporting text to policy DM1 states that development should provide an appropriate mix of housing types flexible enough to adapt to different local needs. It states that shared accommodation, including well-designed HMOs play an important role in providing housing for people on low incomes, those on benefit payments and young professionals. They are often the choice of housing for people who would otherwise be homeless (paragraph 5.5).

On this basis and considered in the context of the significant housing needs of the Borough, there is no objection in principle to the proposed change of use to a large HMO subject to the following considerations:

- The effect on the character of the area and mix of dwellings;
- Residential amenity of future occupiers;
- Effects on neighbouring occupiers;
- Sustainable travel and highway safety.

Local Character and Mix of Dwellings

The supporting text to Policy DM1 (paragraph 5.23) states that the Council will continue to monitor the provision of HMO accommodation throughout the period of the Plan, but does not establish a methodology or seek to impose any numerical limits or thresholds regarding the provision of HMO accommodation or other similar forms of shared accommodation.

Policy DM2 states that proposals must make the most efficient use of land, which will usually mean developing at densities above those of the surrounding area. DM2(c)(i) and (iv) requires consideration of the site context, character of the surrounding area and impacts on adjoining owners when establishing the optimum density of development.

Policy DM5 requires all development including changes of use to (amongst other things) (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 their settings; and (viii) make a positive contribution to creating safe and secure environment by integrating measures for security and designing out opportunities for crime.

The surrounding area is primarily made up of mid-late C20 housing of varying types and style, including semi-detached and terraced houses, and some semi-detached and detached bungalows, typically providing small to medium sized family housing with front and rear gardens. A good proportion, but by no means all, have off-street parking in front, or on driveways to the side of the dwelling.

The modern domestic scale and layout of the majority of existing housing in this area limits the scope for large HMO (sui generis) use compared to the typically more generously-sized, older housing stock found in more central parts of the town.

There are no records of when the current use of the application property as a small HMO (Class C4) commenced, made possible in this case by the larger floor area provided by the previous extensions. The provision of an additional bedroom, resulting in a total of 7 residents, would not have any significant additional impacts on local character. However, a condition is recommended limiting the total number of occupiers to no more than 7no.

No changes are proposed to the external appearance of the dwelling as a result of the proposal.

Residential amenity of future occupiers

The supporting text to Policy DM1 states at Paragraph 5.22 that to ensure the quality of any new accommodation is high and supports a good quality of life it is important that proposals are consistent with the space standards set out in Policy DM2. For HMOs, applications will need to demonstrate compliance with minimum bedroom sizes and that the communal living space and cooking and bathroom facilities provided are of an appropriate size to meet the needs of the expected number of occupants.

The Government's Technical Housing Standards (NDSS) specify a single bedroom as having a minimum floor area of 7.5sqm, and a double room as having a minimum floor area of 11.5sqm.

As amended, the proposed plan shows 7 bedrooms, with the additional new room on the GF having a floor area of 10.3sqm.

An HMO must be licensed if it is occupied by 5 or more people. One existing GF bedroom is shown as having a floor area of 6.5sqm, which would be below the current minimum licensing requirement of 6.54sqm for a single room, and below the above mentioned minimum NDSS of 7.5sqm. It is worth pointing out in an informative that the floor area of this room apparently falls short of the minimum licensable standard. However, it would be difficult to justify refusal of the planning application based on the floor area of an existing bedroom forming part of the current HMO (Class C4) accommodation.

Residents would be provided with satisfactory shared facilities and communal space, including direct access from the kitchen/dining/living area to the amenity of the small garden area and outbuilding/shed.

Effects on neighbouring occupiers

Policy DM5 requires all new development to (amongst other things) make a positive contribution to creating a safe and secure environment, and to not

have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of adjacent properties, including an unacceptable increase in noise.

The size and layout of the application property and surrounding dwellings is relatively compact with neighbours in close proximity. Officer concerns about the intensity of use and poor layout associated with the initial proposal has resulted in the amendment to provide only 1 additional bedroom.

The immediate neighbours on both sides have raised concerns about noise from the existing small HMO.

The Applicant's Agent has sought to address the concern about noise transmission by introducing sound insulation along the inside of the ground-floor party wall (with No.32), which can be secured as a condition of planning permission.

The other matters raised, including inconsiderate use of the garden, not emptying the bins, activity associated with comings and goings early in the morning/late at night, are essentially management issues. For large HMOs elsewhere in the Borough, the Council has required the approval and implementation of a management plan as a condition of planning permission. However, it is considered such a requirement would not be proportionate in this case to the additional amenity impact that would result from 1no additional resident compared to the existing 6-person small HMO.

Highway safety and access

Provision is shown for 1no vehicle on the site frontage utilising the existing VCO off Bellview Road. The Local Highway Authority has highlighted a shortfall in on-site parking provision, noting the sometimes limited capacity for on-street parking (owing to the nearby infant's school), but has not raised any objection on highway safety grounds.

The Applicant has confirmed they are willing to dedicate the existing garden outbuilding as secure cycle storage, to be available to all the tenants.

There is adequate space on the frontage for refuse/re-cycling bins to be stored without interfering with the frontage parking layout (although the existing bin enclosure is in need of some repair).

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to condition(s):-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Total number of residents shall not exceed 7.
4. Acoustic lining to GF party wall as specified and shown on Drawing 02B to be implement prior to first use

5. Existing garden building used to store cycles.

Informative

Pro Action Amendment

HMO Licensing

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 08.06.2026

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 08/06/2026