Expiry Date - 04/08/2025
Extension of Time -

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0707/25 **Recommendation: – APPROVE**

Site: **The Montague Centre Liverpool Road Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Enclosure for new UKPN substation (associated with application AWDM/1624/22)**

Date of Site Visit: 12/6/2025

Neighbours Checked: **Y**

Additional Neighbours Notified: **N**

Site and Surroundings

This town centre site comprises the part-two, part- three storey Georgian-style building which forms the western side of the retail pedestrian area and arcade at Liverpool Buildings.

Its western edge is immediately to the rear of the Georgian style apartment building, Alexander Terrace, and comprises the vehicular access and delivery ramp that runs behind the terrace upwards to retail service entrances at roof level of the Montague Centre. To the south the building fronts Liverpool Gardens, this includes the distinctive colonnade and sculpture above it; 'the Dessert Quartet' also known as the 'Frink Heads'. The heads and colonnade (or logia) are a listed structure with heritage and cultural importance. Liverpool Gardens is part of the South Street Conservation Area and adjoins that of Chapel Road.

The building was constructed around 30 years ago, along with Alexander Terrace, in replacement for the demolished Odeon Cinema. Its architecture closely reflects the listed early C19th neo-classical/ Georgian style of Liverpool Terrace on the opposite side of the intervening gardens. Two matched rotunda towers are located at the northern and southern corners of the building.

Proposal

The proposal is for an electrical substation located on the western side of the building at the base of the vehicular access which provides servicing access for the Montague Centre.

The substation is part of the wider redevelopment of the Montague Centre to provide 45 units above the existing shopping centre. As part of the redevelopment the vehicular access is retained with servicing to residential and commercial units.

The substation would be 4.7m wide by 4.0m deep and about 3.75m tall. It has been designed with render walls to match the existing with column designs on the corners.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1624/22 - Full planning permission for a maximum of three additional floors above the Montague Quarter Shopping centre to provide 42 No. residential units.
STATUS: Application Permitted 6th October 2023.

AWDM/1718/23 - Application for a non-material amendment to previously approved AWDM/1624/22. Change of development description to:
Full planning permission for a maximum of three additional floors above the montague quarter shopping centre to provide self contained residential units on the upper floors
STATUS: Application Permitted 19th February 2024.

AWDM/1194/24 - Application to Vary Condition 1 (approved plans), condition 23 (Obscure glazing & Balcony screen) and condition 28 (number of units) of application AWDM/1624/22 (and amended by NMA application AWDM/1718/23): Amendment allows for an additional three flats within the 2nd floor and an increase in total units to 45, alteration to ground floor access

ORIGINAL DESCRIPTION: Full planning permission for a maximum of three additional floors above the Montague quarter shopping centre to provide self contained residential units on the upper floors.
STATUS: Application Permitted 19th March 2026.

AWDM/0389/26 - Change of use of first floor from retail (Use Class E) to nine residential units (Use Class C3) with associated alterations at ground floor to allow access and the addition of first floor windows.

For consultation purposes this application is in addition to previously approved development for the provision of three additional floors above the Montague Centre containing residential units (applications AWDM/1624/22 & AWDM/1194/24 refer)
STATUS: Pending Consideration

AWDM/0392/26 - Non-material amendment to approved AWDM/1194/24 to increase the overall height of the building by up to 50cm, add lift overruns and relocate car club space and accessible spaces to the first floor
STATUS: Application Permitted 13th August 2026.

Consultations

Environmental Health: I refer to the acoustic assessment produced by 7th Wave Acoustics dated 29 May 2025 in support of this application. The assessment concludes that low frequency noise from the substation will not affect residents within their properties. This follows the calculation of internal sound pressure levels at 31.5, 63 and 125Hz and with partially opened windows. There is no assessment at 160Hz, which we would expect. In addition, closed windows can often make internal sound levels at low frequencies more noticeable, in part because they act as a barrier to other higher frequencies, but also because the glazing's resistance to lower frequencies is often very poor. For completeness and reassurance to nearby residents, I recommend that the calculation in 5.4 is repeated for closed windows alongside the addition of an

assessment of noise at 160Hz. Furthermore, there is no vibration impact assessment. This must also be completed before any permission is granted. Finally, the Transport Assessment prepared by reeves Transport Planning dated May 2023 recommends a Delivery and Servicing Management Plan (DSMP) be provided prior to implementation of the development. I support this as a way of controlling subsequent transport impacts on nearby residential properties.

Officer's response: Following additional information the EHO confirmed they have no further comments.

Conservation architect: The proposed substation would occupy a new building within the public domain at the base of the original service ramp. When the Montague Centre was originally designed, this area was carefully conceived to act as a focal point at the end of Shelley Road using a bold feature of three large windows framed by 4 Caryatids replicating the heads found on the entrance gateway to Park Crescent. The adjacent service ramp rises up behind a large arched gateway. During design negotiations with the current owners of the Montague Centre for the addition of extra floors, careful consideration was given to maintaining this particular vista. It is therefore disappointing that a new substation has now had to be proposed in this location. Within the adjacent tarmaced Council owned car park there is a substation, but apparently the siting of another substation, in this less prominent location has been ruled out. The proposed substation has been designed to try to align with the Neo-Georgian styling of the Montague Centre, although it will still read as an uncharacteristic add on to the overall form of the main building.

WSCC (Highways): WSCC as the County Highway Authority (CHA) has considered the above submission for approval. No Objection is raised in principle however we are aware that due to these changes the car club parking space has not been provided anywhere else on the site and what implications does this have for the operation of the car club?

The proposal is for a new enclosure for a UKPN substation in the location of previously consented disabled parking spaces as part of the Montague Quarter Residential Development (AWDM/1624/22).

These have been moved to the servicing area on the first floor, accessed via the servicing ramp, however as other changes to the development have resulted in this area becoming smaller there is now no space to provide servicing for large HGVS.

Therefore, a new plan has been proposed to provide 3 disabled spaces and space for a smaller 7m long van in the servicing area, and for any larger vehicles such as 11.5m rigid or 16.5m articulated lorries to use the space at the bottom of the ramp.

Swept Path Diagrams
Servicing area – First Floor
SPA diagrams have been shown for the following vehicles using the first-floor servicing area: (MQ/SR/5004 Rev A) shows a Medium sized car can enter park turn and exit in forward gear. (MQ/SR/5003 Rev A) shows a Mercedes sprinter Van 7m in length can enter park turn and exit in forward gear. WSCC has considered the plans together and

can see that space is ample for these two movements to occur if both types of vehicle are stationary in the servicing area.

Servicing Area - base of the ramp SPA diagrams have been shown for the following vehicles using the servicing area at the base of the ramp. (MQ/SR/5002 Rev A) shows an 18-tonne rigid 11.7m HGV can reverse into the base ramp servicing area, to park and exit in forward gear. (MQ/SR/5001 Rev A) shows a 16.5m articulated HGV can reverse into the base ramp servicing area, to park and exit in forward gear. The reversing movement will take place on the public highway and some signage may be required in the highway or on the private area of the building to alert drivers that large vehicles will be reversing here. A banks man may also be required at busy times.

Delivery Servicing Management Plan
This would be welcomed and is understood one has already been conditioned as part of the planning application AWDM/1642/22. However; this should reflect the new proposal could include quieter times for deliveries to protect amenity and also the safety of pedestrians and cyclists by ensuring banks men are available with larger loads. This can also include waste management as this will likely be required instead of local council waste collection.

Dedicated Car Club Bay
The client is going to fund membership for a car club, but can the applicant confirm where the parking space has been relocated to? If there is not enough space for one how will the car club work going forward.

The Worthing Society: The Montague Centre is located within the South Street Conservation Area (CA) in the town centre. There is proximate residential accommodation in Alexander Terrace. The location of the new Substation will be very close to the apartments at the north end of Alexander Terrace potentially causing unacceptable continuous noise nuisance. In addition, the unit is not in character with the CA. There will also be an associated relocation of the residential Blue Badge disabled parking spaces to the top of the service ramp. We note that under Condition 07: Delivery and Servicing Management Plan, as agreed in respect of the associated plan AWDM/1624/22, vehicles using the ramp would be restricted to 7.30am-21.00pm. A similar restriction would, we suggest, be necessary for the relocated residents' parking spaces, to reasonably protect the amenities of residents with bedrooms close to the ramp. I have discussed the application with our Heritage Team and for the reasons stated we object to this application which we submit is not consistent with Policy DM5 of the Local Plan and will adversely affect the amenity of near residents.

Neighbour Representations

No. of Objections 5

- Substation will be located in proximity to windows and impact on living spaces if windows open particularly at night
- Parking should be restricted to 7.30 – 21.00 as per the deliveries to protect amenity
- Deliveries and servicing at foot of service ramp will need to be time limited

- Deliveries will result in traffic build up and constant noise nusianace
- Impact on employment
- loading and unloading of any vehicle associated with servicing units in the Montague Centre be time limited to no more than the current condition and additionally no loading or unloading on Sundays.
- Parking is difficult in the area, antisocial behaviour issues in the area

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM15, DM22, DM24
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2026)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to existing buildings within the built-up area subject to the material considerations set out below.

Visual Amenity and conservation impacts

The proposed substation would occupy a new building within the public domain at the base of the original service ramp. When the Montague Centre was originally designed, this area was carefully conceived to act as a focal point at the end of Shelley Road using a bold feature of three large windows framed by 4 Caryatids replicating the heads found on the entrance gateway to Park Crescent. The adjacent service ramp rises up behind a large arched gateway.

The conservation architect noted that during design negotiations with the current owners of the Montague Centre for the addition of extra floors, careful consideration was given to maintaining this particular vista.

The proposed substation has been designed to try to align with the Neo-Georgian styling of the Montague Centre, although it will still read as an uncharacteristic add on to the overall form of the main building. Unfortunately, it is not considered that the substation could be accommodated in an alternative location.

Although the substation would appear as an add on, some attempt has been made to design it in a similar style to the main building. It is of a single storey and does not project above the main decorative details referred to at first floor or the characteristic arch.

It is therefore considered that as it is necessary as part of the overall redevelopment it is acceptable subject to a condition to approve materials and sections of the proposed detailing.

Residential Amenity

Neighbouring residents have raised concerns regarding noise from the substation. The application was accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment which has been

reviewed by the council's environmental health officer. The EHO requested that additional tests were carried out for closed windows and that vibration impact assessed. Following receipt of a Technical Note (1228.001TM.Response.1.0.NA) which justified the approach taken to the submitted assessments the EHO confirmed they had no further comments.

It is considered that subject to the implementation of the recommendations of the acoustic report, the substation will not have an adverse effect on the residential amenity of neighbouring residents.

Objections have also been raised regarding the servicing of the development and the impact of this on residential amenity. A delivery and servicing plan is under condition 7 of the previously granted AWDM/1194/24. This will take into account changes to the delivery requirements of the development including the use of smaller delivery vehicles. The EHO has confirmed that the submission of a deliveries and servicing plan is suitable as a way of controlling subsequent transport impacts on nearby residential properties.

In terms of residents' concerns about the relocation of the accessible parking spaces, it was not considered necessary to restrict the hours that these could be used. The number of vehicle movements are likely to be low and it is not considered that these would have an adverse impact on amenity for residents living in a town centre location.

Transport

As noted above the main concern is to do with deliveries and servicing which will now take place with smaller vehicles at the top of the ramp and larger vehicles to the north side of the substation. The wording of the condition for AWDM/1194/24 is as follows:

Delivery and Servicing Management Plan

Prior to occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, a Delivery and Servicing Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall describe the management of deliveries and waste management, including arrangements for the collection of waste, commercial delivery times and management of delivery accesses and spaces.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and amenity and to ensure the retention of delivery and service access for vehicles in accordance with policy DM15 of the Worthing Local Plan 2020 - 2036 and the NPPF, 2023.

As set out in the WSCC comments they would like to the plan to reflect the new proposal including quieter times for deliveries to protect amenity and also the safety of pedestrians and cyclists by ensuring banks men are available with larger loads and waste management. It is considered the wording of the condition as existing can cover these elements.

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to condition(s):-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Installed in accordance with noise assessment including anti vibration mounts
4. Details of materials and sections

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission 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? Y

Case Officer:	Louise Prew	Date: 02/10/2026
Authorised by:	Gary Peck	Date: 2 October 2026