Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0307/25 **Recommendation – REFUSE**

Site: 15 Ambrose Place Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the replacement of windows and repainting of exterior walls and detailing.

Application Number: AWDM/0482/25 **Recommendation – REFUSE**

Site: 15 Ambrose Place Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Replacement of timber windows and repainting of exterior walls and detailing.

Date of site visit: 1st July 2025

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings
The site is located on the northern side of Ambrose Place. The property is a three-storey end-of-terrace residential buildings in use as bedsit flats. The terrace is Grade II listed. The official list entry for the property is as follows:

"AMBROSE PLACE 1. 5406 (North Side) TO 1402 W 3/125 No 15 II GV 2. Building forming the west end of the terrace. 3 storeys. Stucco-fronted. Projecting eaves on paired enriched brackets. Two rectangular bays with 3 windows, with a single window between, all sashes with glazing bars. 2nd and 3rd floor windows are of equal size. Ground floor single window is blind. Door on right of 6 moulded panels within a porch formed of an entablature with hearty dentilled cornice supported by slender pilasters. The steps leading to this have decorative iron railings. Them is also a short section of railings along the east part of the frontage. This item is included mainly for group value.

Nos 1 to 15 form a group."

The site is also located within the Chapel Road Conservation Area. The site is subject to an article 4 direction restricting certain works.

Proposal
The proposal is to replace all the windows within the building with new timber double glazed units.

The building will also be redecorated with the façade repainted using a breathable white paint.

Relevant Planning History:

None relevant

Consultations:
Conservation and Design Architect:
The loss of traditional windows from our older buildings poses one of the major threats to our heritage. Traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas. Windows are particularly vulnerable elements of a building as they are relatively easily replaced or altered. Such work often has a profound effect not only on the building itself but on the appearance of the street and local area.

With an increasing emphasis being placed on making existing buildings more energy efficient, replacement windows have become a greater threat than ever before to the character of historic buildings and areas. Historic England, Traditional Windows.

This application proposes the removal and replacement of 41 traditional timber windows and 2 pairs of French doors, the only justification for the major loss of fabric of this Listed Building being "improving thermal performance". A building's energy efficiency may also be improved by simple thermal upgrading options, such as draught-proofing or secondary glazing, such additions retaining the important fabric of listed buildings and usually available at much less cost.

It is the stated opinion of the agents for this application, ECE Planning, that the proposed windows would be like for like, replicating the existing profiles, glazing bar pattern, and overall design in accordance with conservation best practices.

However, there are a large number of significant visual differences which would cause significant harm. The framing members including the meeting rails are thicker, resulting in narrower glazing sight lines. The proposed windows have extending sills, trickle vents, and sash horns. The existing traditional Georgian bar windows were made using individual panes of glass, puttied into full depth glazing bars, whilst the proposed windows use a single double glazed panel in each sash with fake glazing bars attached to the two surfaces of the glazing with spacers between the sheets of glass. (Please note there are no application photographs showing internal views of the existing windows and no drawing sections either). The proposed windows are not bespoke, but are mass produced using standard sections and details, and hence are a poor reproduction of the existing windows.

I have no objection to the redecorating works outlined.

Worthing Society:

The Worthing Society objects to the proposed replacement windows. The design is too standardised. It appears that imitation glazing bars stuck to the glass are to be used and this is not appropriate. We understand that your Conservation Architect Richard Small is not happy with the proposal and we consider that better quality replacement windows are needed here.

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036 (2023)
SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
SP2 (Climate Change)
DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment)
DM16 (Sustainable Design)
DM23 (Strategic Approach to the Historic Environment)
DM24 (The Historic Environment)

Planning Assessment

Visual amenity and impact on heritage assets

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that the local planning authority should have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess, and special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The NPPF, further emphasises that when considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Policy DM24 states that 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. It also states that 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.

Policy DM5 seeks to ensure all new development is of a high architectural and design quality and respect and enhance the character of the site and the prevailing character of the area.

It is proposed to replace all the existing windows with double-glazed units. The application mentions that these will improve thermal performance. The external repainting will help maintain the building's appearance and longevity. It is noted the building is subject to a Housing Act improvement notice which requires changes to improve the quality of accommodation for residents.

Historic windows make an important contribution to the architectural interest of listed buildings and provide evidence of historic fabric, craftsmanship and detailing. There is a presumption in favour of their retention and sympathetic repair. Replacement of historic windows will be considered where it can be demonstrated that they are beyond repair and this should be assessed on a window-to-window basis.

As noted above, while the application notes that the changes will be like for like there are a large number of significant visual differences which would cause significant harm. The framing members including the meeting rails are thicker, resulting in narrower glazing sight lines. The proposed windows have extending sills, trickle vents, and sash horns. The existing traditional Georgian bar windows were made using individual panes of glass, puttied into full depth glazing bars, whilst the proposed windows use a single double glazed panel in each sash with fake glazing bars attached to the two surfaces of the glazing with spacers between the sheets of glass.

The application has submitted an existing window schedule. However, this only shows photos of the windows externally at a scale and angles where it is not possible to appreciate the detail of each window. It would be expected that internal photos of each of the windows to be replaced would be provided.

The result is proposed windows which are not bespoke, but are mass produced using standard sections and details, and are therefore a poor reproduction of the existing windows. The proposed replacement is considered to cause harm to the special character of the listed building.

The property forms part of an attractive and historic Grade II listed terrace. The terrace is a key part of the Chapel Road Conservation Area where an article four restricts certain works to further protect the existing character. The replacement windows are considered to cause less than substantial harm to the conservation area.

The repainting works are considered to be acceptable and will preserve the appearance of the listed building and wider conservation area.

Residential amenity
The proposals are within the existing openings so won’t result in any change to neighbouring residents’ amenity.

Standard of accommodation
The proposals would result in increased thermal performance which would result in warmer homes which require the use of less energy to heat. This is considered to be a benefit of the scheme.

Conclusion

The NPPF (paragraph 213) states that any harm to or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Where a development proposal will lead to less that substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the (paragraph 214).

The Applicant has not provided clear and convincing justification for the harm to the special architectural and historic qualities of this Grade II listed building. While the scheme would result in improvements to the living conditions these are not sufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of this listed building and the wider conservation area.

The proposals would fail to preserve the listed building or any features of special interest which it possesses, contrary to sections 66 (1) and 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The proposed development is contrary to policies DM5 and DM24 of Worthing Local Plan (2023).

Recommendation

AWDM/0482/25 (full application)

REFUSE for the reason:-

The proposed window replacement, by reason of detailed design, would be detrimental to the special architectural and historical qualities of this listed building, the terrace of which it forms part, and the wider Chapel Road Conservation Area contrary to policies DM5 and DM24 of the Worthing Local Plan, and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework and fails the statutory tests in Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

AWDM/0307/25 (listed building consent)

REFUSE for the reason:

The proposed window replacement, by reason of detailed design and loss of historic fabric, results in unacceptable harm to the special architectural and historical qualities of this listed building contrary to policy DM24 of the Worthing Local Plan, and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework and fails the statutory tests in Sections 16(2) and 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

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

Case Officer:	Louise Prew	Date: 08/07/2025
Authorised by:	Peter Barnett	Date: 9 July 2025