Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0424/25 Recommendation: Refuse

Site: 31 Graham Road, Worthing

Proposal: **Rooms in roof consisting of rear and outrigger dormers and front rooflights**

Date of site visit: 29.04.2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N Site notice posted 29.04.2025

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 No's 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 roofslope connecting to the side roofslope of the rear outrigger as a wrap-around L-shaped design over the two rear roofslopes. Two rooflights are also proposed to the front roofslope.

The rear roof extension would extend across the full width of the main roofslope and would measure approximately 4.6 metres in width, 3.4 metres in depth and 2.1 metres in height at this point, set just below the main ridge level. Its southern half would connect over the rear outrigger roof to form an L-shaped wrap-around dormer. This outrigger roof section would measure approximately 3 metres in width, 2.7 metres in depth and 3.6 metres in height which would extend approximately 2 metres above the ridge of the outrigger. The roof extension would be finished in tile hanging.

Relevant Planning History:
None relevant

Consultations:

Worthing Society – no objection

Representations:
None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM24
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 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.

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 19" 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.

The roofscape makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Although the proposed roof extension would be at the rear of the building, the spacing between buildings in Crescent Road allows views towards the rear roofslope of the terrace where the proposed development would be visible.
It is acknowledged that there are other dormer extensions within this part of the conservation area. However those visible in the vicinity are limited to the corner section of one other smaller dormer extension at the rear of No.33 from this vantage point in Crescent Road, and there are traditional pitched roof dormers on the front elevation of No's 30 and 32 Crescent Road also visible at this point.

The proposed dormer extension at No.31 would be particularly large and bulky and appear as a dominant and top-heavy addition to the building, unsympathetic in scale, form and design. It is noted that no south elevation has been provided to fully understand the appearance or detailing of the south side elevation. Nevertheless on the basis of information provided it is clear that the combination of the size of the rear dormer, with minimal or no setback from the edges of the roof, and the wrap-around form, height and bulky design of the side dormer to the rear projection extending some 2 metres above the ridge level, would appear as an incongruous addition and where it would dominate. The minimal proportion of glazing proposed would exacerbate the bulky appearance.

The resultant effect would appear as an unsympathetic, overbearing and excessive addition that would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. This would be harmful to the character and special qualities of the conservation area with views of the proposed development that would be possible from within the conservation area in Crescent Road. There are no public benefits outlined in the application or considered relevant that would outweigh the harm identified 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. However no Article 4 direction exists for the terrace and it is noted that similar rooflights could be installed as Permitted Development. No precise details have been provided or stipulating that these would be a conservation type rooflight windows. Further details in this respect would have been sought if the application was to be granted.

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 to solely to rooflight windows on the front elevation and the effect would be similar to the existing front windows.

To the north, the adjoining dwelling at No.33 generally mirrors the arrangement at the site with a similar outrigger opposite that of No.31. The roof extensions would be

particularly large and bulky, and although the roof extension would be felt in the context of the existing two storey building, the height and form of the wrap-around design to the side roofslope of the rear projection would be particularly unneighbourly and overbearing to the occupiers of No.33 with a loss of light and increased sense of enclosure in particular suffered by those occupiers.

To the south side, the neighbouring dwelling at No. 29 forms a symmetrical pair with the application dwelling with its rear projection matching that of the application site. No south elevation has been provided to fully understand how the rear wall of the side dormer would be finished and there is missing detail on the plan in relation to the remaining part of the chimney that would be partially removed. Further details would have been requested if the application was recommended for approval. Nevertheless, on the basis of the information provided it is considered that the roof extensions would be sufficiently remote from the neighbouring windows and in the context of the adjoining rear projection there would be no significant harm caused to the occupiers of No.29.

Dwellings to the rear of the site in Crescent Road would be sufficiently separated to avoid any significant impact.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the reasons:-

1. 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 policy 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.

2. 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.

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, allowing the Applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal. The Local Planning Authority is willing to provide pre-application advice in respect of any future application for a revised development.

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

Case Officer:	Rebekah Hincke	Date: 21.05.2025
Authorised by:	Louise Prew	Date: 21/05/2025