Expiry Date - 03/10/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1034/24 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Flat 5 Wisden Court Findon Road Worthing

Proposal: Conversion of three-bedroom flat into two one-bedroom flats for older (retirement) residential purposes.

Date of site visit: 01/10/2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

This application relates to a two-storey retirement housing complex which comprises of one bedroom units within the Findon Valley. Other than the one bedroom units there are a number of shared facilities including a lounge and garden. The flat is currently a three bedroom property, with a lounge, kitchen and bathroom.

The flat is located on the ground floor and is located on the south western corner of the building facing No.14 Prince William Close to the south and Durrington Cemetery to the west.

The site is not listed or within a conservation area nor are there any trees on the site that have any TPOs.

Proposal
Planning permission is sought to convert this three-bedroom former wardens flat into 2 one-bedroom flats for elderly occupants. To facilitate the change into two flats there will be a new window to be located on the southern elevation. Additionally, there will be a ramp to a new door introduced on the western elevation with a new window.

Relevant Planning History:
None

Consultations:

Southern Water: *Under current legislation, Southern Water can consider the adoption of SuDS if they are to be designed and constructed in line with the Design and Construction Guidance (http://www.water.org.uk/sewerage-sector-guidance-approved-documents/). No new soakaways, swales, ponds, watercourses, associated attenuation tanks or any other surface water retaining or conveying features should be located within 5 metres of a public or adoptable gravity sewer, rising main or water main.*

The Council's Building Control officers or technical staff should be asked to comment on the adequacy of soakaways to dispose of surface water from the proposed development. No new soakaways should be located within 5 metres of a public or adoptable gravity sewer, rising main or water main.

Our investigations indicate that Southern Water can facilitate foul sewage disposal to service the proposed development. Southern Water requires a formal application for a connection to the public sewer to be made by the applicant or developer.

To make an application visit Southern Water's Get Connected service: https://developerservices.southernwater.co.uk and please read our New Connections Charging Arrangements documents which are available on our website via the following link: https://www.southernwater.co.uk/developing-building/connection-charging-arrangements

We request that should this planning application receive planning approval, the following informative is attached to the consent: Construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of foul sewerage and surface water disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

For further advice, please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX (Tel: 0330 303 0119).

Website: southernwater.co.uk or by email at: SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk

Officer's response: An informative can be added but as it is not a condition the LPA cannot require it prior to commencement or to be approved by the LPA. The applicant will be directed to Southern Water directly.

Environmental Health: *Works of construction or demolition, including the use of plant and machinery, necessary for implementation of this consent shall be limited to the following times.*

Monday - Friday 08:00 - 18:00 Hours
Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 Hours
Sundays and Bank Holidays no work permitted

Any temporary exception to these working hours shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority at least five days in advance of works commencing. The contractor shall notify the local residents in writing at least three days before any such works.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of the area.

WSCC Highways: *No vehicular parking is to be provided for this development. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that a*

dwelling of this size in this location would require at least two car parking spaces. Consequently, vehicular parking would have 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 proposed nil 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 town centre location, within walking distance of public transport links and public car parks.

The site is situated in a sustainable town centre location within walking/cycle distance of local services and amenities. Cycling is a viable option in the area. The site is also well connected by public transport, with regular buses available from Broadwater Street. Worthing Train Station is situated approximately 1.6km south of the site.

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 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

UK Power Networks: *Please note there are HV/LV underground cables on the site running within close proximity to the proposed development. Prior to commencement of work accurate records should be obtained from our Plan Provision Department at UK Power Networks, Fore Hamlet, Ipswich, IP3 8AA.*

All works should be undertaken with due regard to Health & Safety Guidance notes HS(G)47 (Avoiding Danger from Underground services). This document is available from local HSE office.

Should any diversion works be necessary as a result of the development then enquiries should be made to our Customer Connections department. The address is UK Power Networks, Metropolitan house, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 1AG.

You can also find support and application forms on our website Moving electricity supplies or equipment | UK Power Networks

Representations:
One received:

The parking situation here at Wisden Court is minimal, sometimes not enough for the Residents. I would be grateful for any Information that this Conversion of Bedroom Flats affects the parking for the Residents of Wisden Court.

Officer's response: Addressed within the transport section below

Relevant Planning Policies
National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance
Worthing Local Plan: DM1, DM2, DM5, DM15, DM18
SPD 'Space Standards' (WBC 2012)
SPD 'Guide to Residential Development' (WBC 2013)
WSCC Guidance on Parking for New Development (2020)

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The Worthing Local Plan was adopted on 28th March 2023. Policy SS1 sets out the Housing supply over the period 2020-2036 and gives a total figure of 3672 (an annual target of 230 dwellings per annum).

Paragraph 76 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision-making purposes where:

a) The adopted plan is less than 5 years old; and
b) That adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.

Paragraph 77 goes on to state that where there has been a significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, the supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of 20% (moved forward from later in the Plan period).

The most recent housing trajectory and 5-year housing land supply for Worthing can be found in the Annual Monitoring Report 2022-23. Table 9 indicates the Five-Year Supply measured against the adopted WLP annual target of 230 dwellings plus a 20% buffer and demonstrates a 7 year supply of deliverable sites.

To maintain the supply of housing paragraph 79 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to monitor progress in building out sites with planning permission. Where the Housing Delivery test indicates delivery has fallen below 75% of the local planning authorities housing requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, in addition to the requirement for an Action plan and 20% buffer.

The latest Housing Delivery Test was published in December 2023 and Worthing Borough Council scored 33%. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies as the delivery of housing was less than 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.

The site is within a sustainable location, within walking/cycle distance of local services and amenities and well connected by public transport, with regular bus services from within the direct locality (92m to the east of the site). There is no objection in principle to the subdivision of the existing plot to provide an additional unit for assisted. The key considerations are the effects on visual amenity and local character, the amenities of existing and future occupiers, access and highway safety matters and biodiversity.

Policy DM1 of the Worthing Local Plan relates to the conversion of dwellings into smaller self-contained accommodation expresses that the conversions must result in a high level of accommodation meeting the space requirements and providing outside amenity space. The Council will also consider the impact on the mix of dwellings locally, the impact on the character of the area and the amenity of adjoining dwellings.

Policy DM1c states that developments should provide adaptable accommodation to meet the needs of the community and the changing needs of occupants over time. The site is located within a wider retirement housing complex and originally comprised the wardens' living quarters which is now not required. As such the conversion into 2no. separate units of accommodation is considered to be adapting to the needs of the locality.

Visual Amenity

The application has minimal impact on the visual amenity of the street scene, this is due to the location of the site being set back from the street with a large level of screening from the public realm. Furthermore, the proposal is located to the rear of the site on the southwestern corner of the property.

The views from within the cemetery will not be largely impacted by the proposal due to the boundary screening and the lack of footprint increase ensures that there is no physical encroachment towards the boundaries.

The ramps due to their locations will not be visible from the wider street scene, within the site one of the ramps to the south would be visible but due to the nature of the proposal it is not considered that it would be out of character with the host property. As such it is considered that the ramps would be compliant with policy and not to the detriment of the wider locality.

Materials will be conditioned to match to ensure the new door and window complement the existing building. The additional windows will not detract from the existing building with a form that is similar to that of the existing as such they are considered to be harmonious with the surrounding property and acceptable in terms of visual impact.

As such it is not considered that the introduction of a window, door and access ramps would be detrimental to the application and are in accordance with Policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

Within Policy DM2 it explains that the conversion of properties into smaller properties should not be detrimental to the amenity of the neighbouring properties. The other properties within the locality are not considered to have their amenities impacted to a demonstrable level. This is due to the opening of the amenity space to the wider site.

Due to the current use of the property the conversion to two separate units of accommodation is not considered to result in an intensification of the site. This is due to the existing property hosting three bedrooms and the proposal resulting in two bedrooms. As such the use will have a reduction in the potential residents.

To ensure that there is no unacceptable noise transfer between the proposed flats and the neighbouring properties a condition will be attached to ensure the noise insulation between them is of a standard considered acceptable.

The proposal would not see the introduction of any additional openings that would provide views which are not currently available. As such there would not be any overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing that would not already be in situ.

Standard of accommodation
The minimum requirement for a 1 person 1 bedroom flat is to be 39sqm. In the proposed development Flat 5A has a total of 41.47sqm GIA and 3.22sqm of storage exceeding the requirement for 1sqm of storage. Flat 5B is proposed to have a total of 47.48sqm with 2.87sqm storage.

The proposed flats will have access to the shared grounds of the wider care home and the space which was reserved for the caretakes private amenity space. To both of the flats there are windows which will provide habitable light to the primary accommodation rooms such as the bedrooms and living rooms.

Therefore, it is considered that the standard of accommodation is of a level that exceeds the requirements and would be policy compliant.

Highways
The provision of two spaces for cars should be provided with the change resulting in the addition of a property. Although there are no additional parking spaces provided there are a number of parking spaces, car parks and space on nearby roads to cope with the parking demand. Furthermore, due to the location of the proposal there are good transport links to Worthing as well as other local parades of shops and restaurants etc. It is noted that the Local Highway Authority was consulted and raised no objection on highways grounds.

Biodiversity Net Gain
Due to the lack of an increase in the size of the site or the impact on available biodiversity it is not considered that a biodiversity net gain is required and the proposal does not trigger the 20% requirement.

Expiry Date - 03/10/2024

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Materials to match
4. Sound insulation
5. Hours of work

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.

UK Power
Street naming and numbering
Southern Water

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

Case Officer: Finlay Gardner Date: 04/12/2024

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 04/12/2024