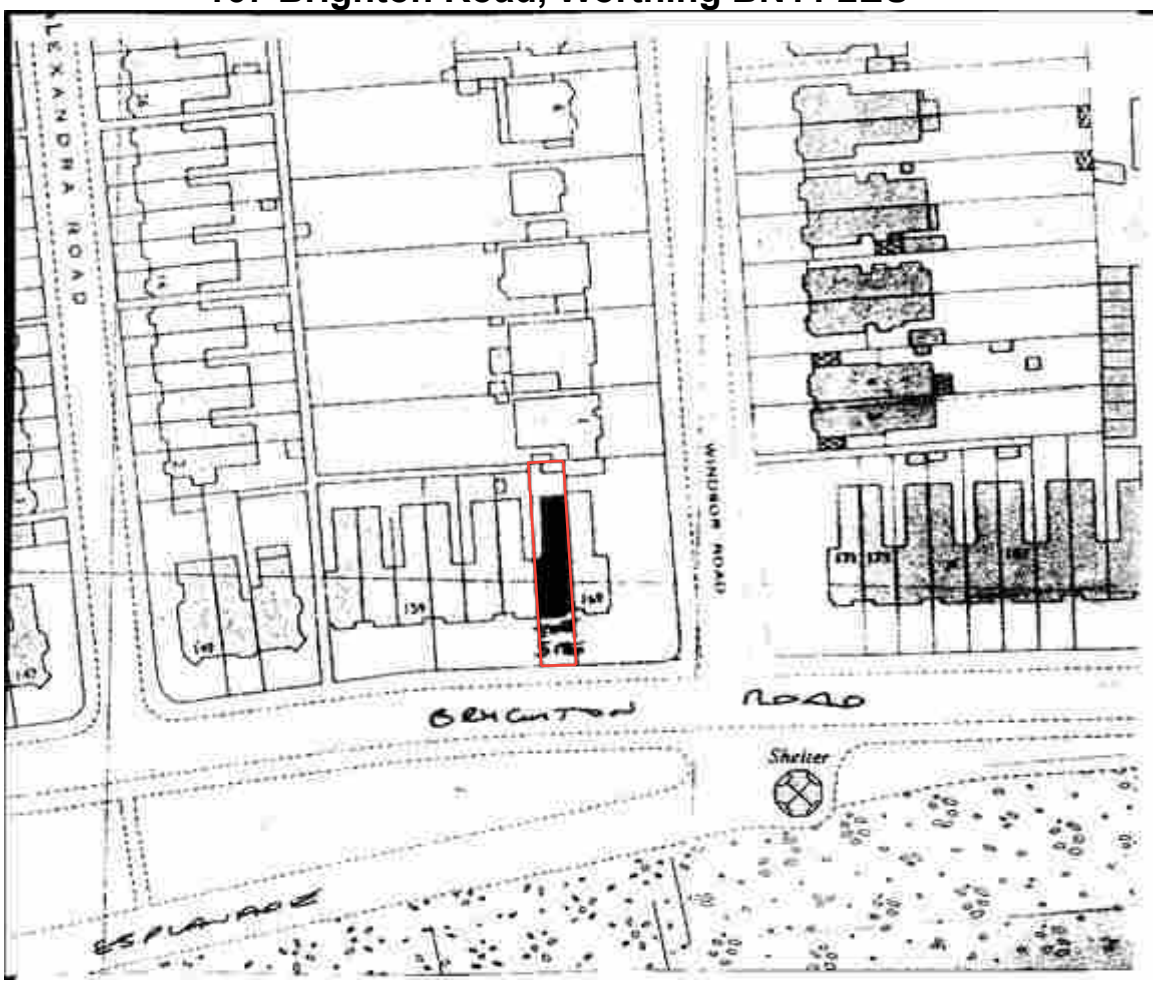
Design and Access Statement

167 Brighton Road, Worthing BN11 2EU



Site plan 1:1250

1. Amount

The proposal is to change the use of the property from residential (two flats) to Trauma Therapy Centre for vulnerable children (E(e) class)

The property was originally given approval under WB/06/1047FULL to be converted from office use to the residential.

2. Layout

The property is accessed from Brighton Road. There are mixed rooms, as annotated on the accompanying plan on three floors.

3. Scale

The overall dimensions of the proposal are unaltered, as the application is for change of use of the building only.

4. Landscaping

There is no real existing landscaping to the north other than shrub planting and paved path.

The south garden is currently a paved area for storage of the bins with slate chippings infill around. There is some shrub planting against the wall of the property. (Picture below)



5. Appearance

The appearance of the proposal will be unaltered as the works are for a change of use only.

6. Use

The use of the proposal will be as a Trauma Therapy Centre for vulnerable children. (See accompanying letter from Clients attach to this statement)

7. Access

The premises are accessed from Brighton Road for pedestrians/visitors

There are bus stops for the 700 bus route within 100m of the site, for buses to Worthing town centre and Brighton.

Time sensitive permit parking bays are available in Windsor Road and Brighton Road to the east of the site.



Planning Application for Change of Use: Flats 1 and 2, 167 Brighton Road, Worthing, BN11 2EU

This application seeks permission for change of use for Flats 1 and 2, 167 Brighton Road, Worthing, BN11 2EU, to allow the continuation of specialist trauma therapy services for vulnerable children and young people, delivered by Elevate-Evolve Ltd.

Background

In 2021, Sussex Psychology Services Ltd was granted planning permission for change of use at 28 Madeira Avenue, Worthing (BN11 2AU), transitioning from its previous location at 88 Bramley Road. Since then, the new location has enabled a local team of trauma trained psychologists and therapists to provide much needed high-quality therapeutic and assessment services to very vulnerable children and young people across the Worthing community.

Currently, 65% of the children receiving therapy through this service reside within 10 miles of Worthing and a further 25% live within 20 miles. These children, often adopted or living with Special Guardians or kinship carers, have typically experienced complex early developmental trauma. This essential work is largely funded through the **Adoption Support Fund** (ASF), a central government initiative.

Dr Christie-Sands, owner of Sussex Psychology Services Ltd, has recently withdrawn from providing clinical services and will return 28 Madeira Avenue to residential use. This change risks a serious disruption to an essential assessment and therapeutic service relied upon by highly vulnerable children and families across the region.

Proposed Continuation Through Elevate-Evolve Ltd

To ensure continuity of care, **Elevate-Evolve Ltd** has been established by **Daniela Gerard (Senior Psychologist)** and **Valerie Newton (Clinical Services Manager)**—both formerly with Sussex Psychology Services Ltd. Adoption South East, Regional Adoption Agency has confirmed its commitment to continue funding services through this new organisation.

The proposed base for Elevate-Evolve is 167 Brighton Road, currently a residential property owned by Valerie Newton. The property is ideally suited for therapeutic use, offering a calm and safe environment with soundproofing to protect confidentiality, fire safety features, and excellent transport links. This includes proximity to both East and Central Worthing railway stations and easy access to the 700 bus route. Local car parks provide ample parking for staff and visitors travelling by car.

Each therapist typically sees 4–5 clients per day for hour-long sessions, and some parental and adult work is now conducted remotely, a development accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Clinical Need and Specialist Expertise

The need for timely, specialist psychological support is acute. Children referred to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) for assessments such as Autism or ADHD often wait over three years. Elevate-Evolve will offer these assessments and provide ongoing support for parents managing such complex developmental conditions.

Our team of psychologists and therapists are trauma-trained, many with decades of experience in this highly specialised field. Their work is grounded in the **Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics**

(NMT)™, developed by world-renowned psychiatrist Dr Bruce Perry. This neuroscience-informed model is designed to support recovery from complex trauma by focusing on regulation, relational connection, and reasoning. Our psychologists are trained in this model and collaborate closely with Dr Perry's teams in the U.S. and Europe.

Few UK-based services can match this level of expertise, and its local presence in Worthing is critical for vulnerable families.

Property Suitability

167 Brighton Road is well suited for therapeutic use:

- **Four dedicated therapy/assessment rooms**, including one specifically designed for creative and sensory work (play, art, sensory integration, attachment therapy).
- No structural changes proposed, **except for a dropped kerb and removal of a section of the front garden wall** to create a single disabled parking bay, for less mobile clients.
- Quiet, professional environment operating **Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 6:30pm** only.
- No forensic or high-risk cases will be managed from this location.
- Use will not cause disruption to neighbouring properties.

The building was previously registered as **The Anchorage Hotel**, later converted by OT Holdings Ltd into residential flats in the early 2000s. Historically, the site also supported consultancy and assessment services, making this proposed use both appropriate and consistent with past usage.

Whilst the application does represent the loss of two residential units, **28 Madeira Avenue** will be returned to residential use, reintroducing a large, refurbished family home to the local housing market (3 receptions, 5 bedrooms).

We are prepared to accept a **Section 106 agreement** requiring reversion to residential use should Elevate-Evolve Ltd cease to trade.

Policy Consideration: Worthing Local Plan – Policy DM1

We acknowledge Policy DM1 of the Worthing Local Plan, which resists the loss of residential accommodation except in exceptional circumstances. However, this application clearly meets an **identified and urgent community need** for specialist mental health services and therapeutic support. Given the withdrawal of Sussex Psychology and the limited local capacity to provide such specialist trauma-informed care, granting this application will ensure **essential continuity** for vulnerable children and families.

Government and Community Support

The **Adoption Support Fund** has enjoyed broad cross-party and cross-sector support, described by MPs, parents, and therapists as a "lifeline" for children experiencing the lifelong consequences of early trauma. While recent political shifts raised questions about the ASF's future, the current government—specifically the Under Secretary of State for Education, Janet Daby—has affirmed its support, recognising the critical role such services play in reducing long-term care dependency.

Without therapeutic support, more vulnerable adoptive and Special Guardian placements will fail. Approximately 25% of adoptions break down without such support, leading to a return to local

authority care—an outcome that is both financially burdensome and damaging for the child and family.

The consequences of failing to support these children can include:

- **Escalating mental health issues** (anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation)
- **Undiagnosed conditions affecting long term access to learning and future employment prospects**
- **Increased school exclusions**
- **Involvement with the criminal justice system**
- **Homelessness, addiction, and teenage pregnancy**
- **Lifelong dependency on public services**

Our experience shows that therapeutic intervention not only stabilises the child but can often save family placements from breaking down. The support provided by Sussex Psychology Services—and now intended through Elevate-Evolve—has been the decisive factor for many families who were close to ending their guardianship or adoption arrangements.

Parental and Family Support

The therapeutic process extends beyond the child. Families require psychoeducation and emotional support to understand and adapt to the child's needs. We work in close partnership with parents, carers, and schools to support them in understanding and responding to complex behaviours, including emotional dysregulation, separation anxiety, hypervigilance, rejection sensitivity, lack of impulse control, oppositional defiance, sleep disturbance and eating disorders. Without this guidance, even the most nurturing families can feel overwhelmed and defeated.

Our service empowers families to remain intact, fosters emotional healing, and promotes healthy development.

Summary of Key Points

- **No structural alteration** proposed save for one disabled parking space.
- **Calm, therapeutic setting**, respectful to neighbours and local community.
- **Limited operating hours** (Mon–Fri, 8:30–6:30).
- A **crucial specialist local mental health service** for children and young people.
- **No forensic or high-risk client base.**
- **Willingness to enter Section 106 agreement** for future residential reversion.
- Net housing impact is **neutral**, as 28 Madeira Avenue returns to residential use.
- Direct alignment with **Worthing Local Plan's exception clause** for Policy DM1, due to strong community benefit.

This application is made in the urgent interest of safeguarding mental health provision for some of Worthing's most vulnerable children and preserving access to specialist trauma-informed care. Without a suitable base from which to operate, these services—and the families who rely on them—face unacceptable disruption. Approval of this change of use will ensure that a trusted, established and local therapeutic team remains available to meet an essential need in the local community.