



PLANNING STATEMENT

Conversion of vacant part of ground floor level to 3no C3 units

December 2024

Site: Dolphin Court, Shelley Road, Worthing, BN11 4DD

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application relates to the property known as Dolphin Court on Shelley Road, Worthing. The building comprises of an eastern part, of historic residential character, and a western part, which has the form of a modern apartment block. This application relates only to the ground floor (GF) level of the eastern part, which is currently vacant.
- 1.2 The application proposes three (c3) units within the GF level of the eastern part of the building (comprising 2no studio flats and 1no 1-bed flat).
- 1.3 The proposed use would be wholly compatible with the existing locality which is a residential neighbourhood and predominantly comprised of flatted buildings and residential blocks.
- 1.4 The proposal would appropriately optimise the site and deliver vital new housing in the context of a significant under-delivery of housing sites. Paragraph 11d) is engaged.
- 1.5 The units would offer a good standard of occupant amenity and exceed NDSS standards.
- 1.6 There would be no harm to neighbouring amenity.
- 1.7 The locality is highly sustainable.
- 1.8 There would be no unacceptable highway impacts.
- 1.9 There are no heritage or ecology sensitivities.
- 1.10 Further to the above, it is clearly demonstrated herein that the application is fully compliant with local and national policy and should be approved accordingly.

2 RELEVANT POLICY

2.1 The following local and national policies are relevant to this application.

Worthing Local Plan 2023

2.2 The following policies from the Worthing Local Plan are relevant:

- SP1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- SS1 Spatial strategy;
- DM1 Housing mix;
- DM2 Density;
- DM5 Quality of the built environment;
- DM15 Sustainable transport and active travel;
- DM16 Sustainable design;
- DM17 Energy;
- DM20 Flood risk and sustainable drainage;

2.3 The following SPDs from the Worthing Local Development Framework are relevant:

- Space standards SPD (2012);
- Guide to residential development SPD (2013).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.4 Within the NPPF (December 2024) as-a-whole.

3 SITE CONTEXT

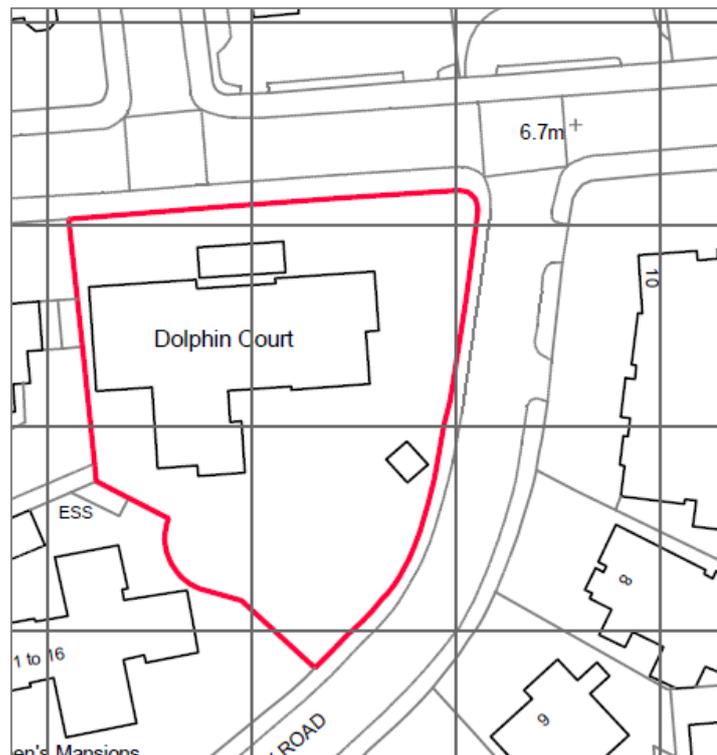
3.1 The application site is Dolphin Court, Shelley Road, Worthing, BN11 4DD.

Locality description

3.2 The site comprises a large residential building and associated curtilage and is located in Hene Ward, just north-west of the town centre and around 300m north of the seafront.

3.3 Shelley Road is an east-west trending street that connects Liverpool Gardens (at the eastern end) to Hene Road (at the western end). The application site is around 200 m east of Hene Road.

3.4 The site is a corner plot located on the southern side of the street and on the western side of the junction with Southey Road. The site is adjacent to the junction with Shakespeare Road (on the northern side of the street). See location plan below.



Above: Location plan

3.5 The immediate area has a residential character. Properties mainly comprise of modern residential blocks and large detached buildings subdivided into flats.

- 3.6 Buildings are 2, 3 and 4 storeys tall, set-back within their plots and flanked by generous parking/driveway areas and lawn space. The locality contains a mixture of modern era developments alongside properties of a more historic appearance. See images below.
- 3.7 The buildings of historic character display pitched roofs, front gables, canted and rectangular bays, rounded-arch windows and doorways, and assorted finish materials including pale render, red brick, flint, clay tile and roof slate. These buildings are often substantially extended.
- 3.8 The modern apartment blocks have understated designs, flat roofs and a brick finish.

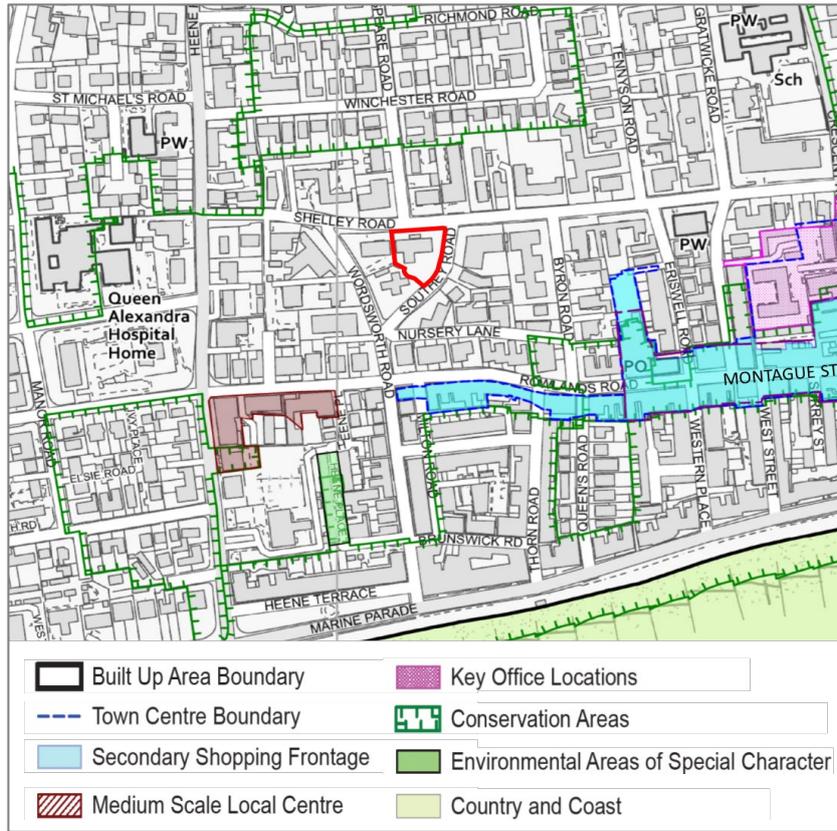


Above: Aerial view to south of the area around the application site (indicated). (© Google).



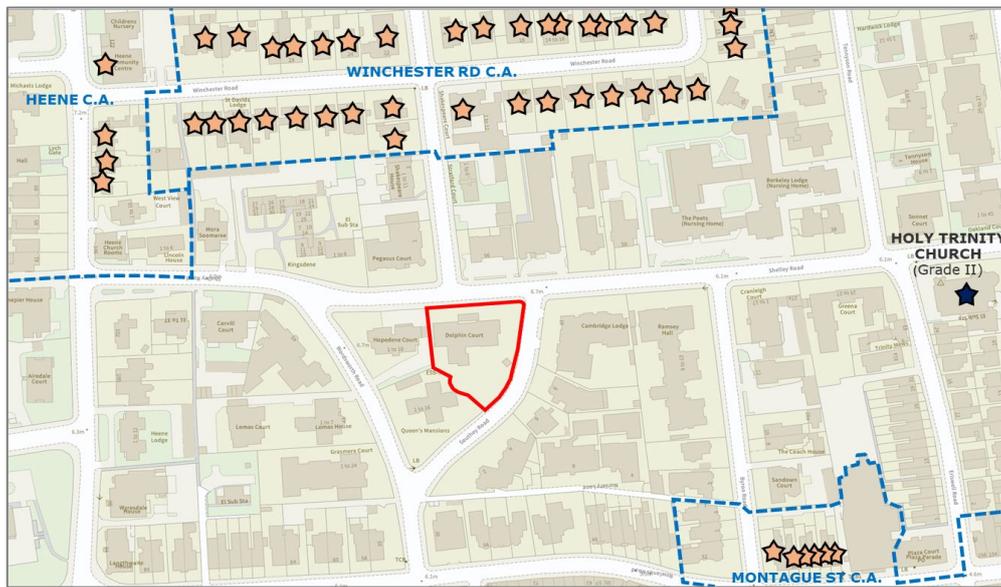
Above: Aerial view to north of the area around the application site (indicated). (© Google).

- 3.9 The site is not within any WBC Planning Policy Zones other than the built-up area boundary – see policy map excerpt below.



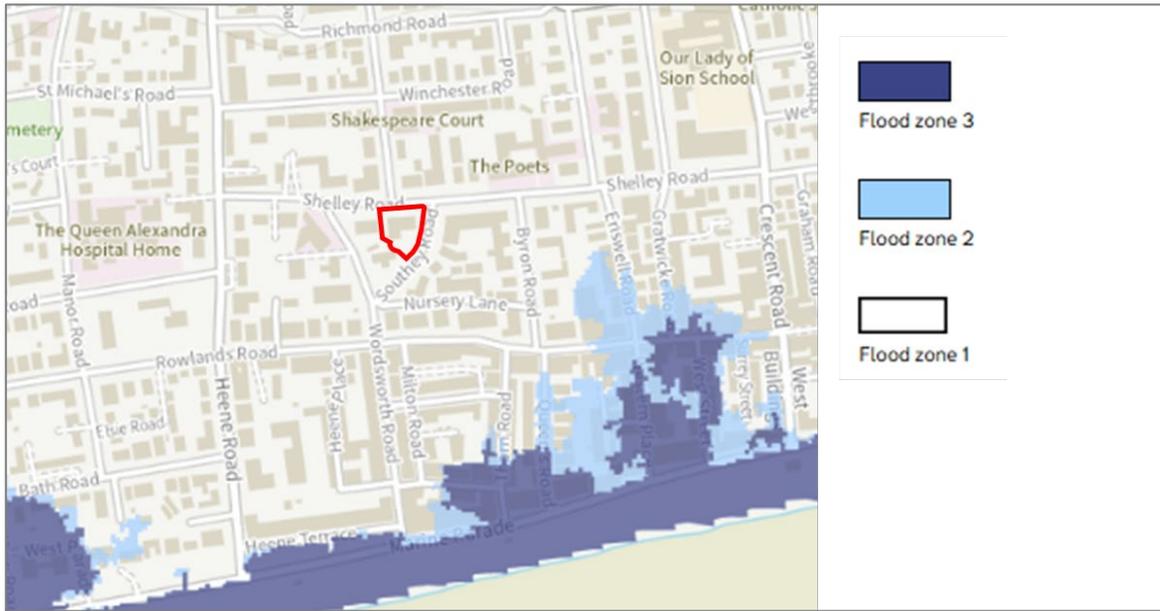
Above: Policy zone context (site indicated). (© WBC).

- 3.10 The site is not in a Conservation Area and there are no Article 4s specific to the locality.
- 3.11 The site is not a Listed Building or Building of Local Interest, nor is it adjoined or adjacent to any listed buildings. The distribution of nearby heritage assets is presented below.



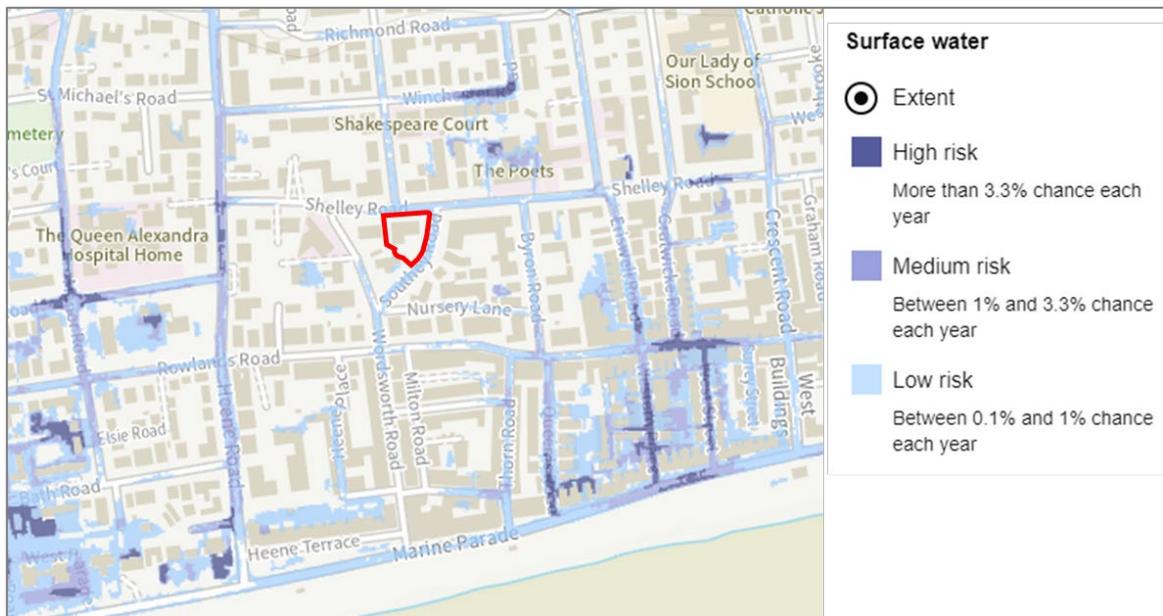
Above: Listed Buildings (dark stars) and Local Interest Buildings (orange stars) in the vicinity of the application site (indicated). (© Historic England and WBC – modified).

- 3.12 The nearest Listed Building is Holy Trinity Church (Grade II) located 225m to the east on Shelley Road. The application site cannot realistically be perceived within the backdrop of views of the church looking West along Shelley Road, given the distance of separation and the number of intervening trees.
- 3.13 The only potentially relevant Local Interest Buildings are those 100m to the north on Shakespeare Road around the junction with Winchester Road. These buildings are effectively equivalent to the Winchester Road Conservation Area. The application site partially features as a minor element in the backdrop of views south from the junction along Shakespeare Road. Given the minimal nature of the proposed external works, and the distance of separation, the proposal can have no material impact in these views.
- 3.14 The site cannot feasibly feature in views of other nearby Local Interest Buildings on Heene Road and Montague Street, due to the orientation of the streets and the arrangement of built form.
- 3.15 Given the above, the proposal can have no material impact on the setting of local heritage assets. Heritage impact is therefore not considered any further within this statement.
- 3.16 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and there are therefore no concerns regarding flooding from the sea (see map below).



Above: Flood zone context (site indicated). (@gov.uk).

3.17 Surface water risks are restricted to the road and to not impact the site (see map below).



Above: Surface water flood risk context (site indicated). (@gov.uk).

3.18 The site is just 100m north of the western branch of the Town Centre, which extends along Rowlands Road. A Medium Scale Local Centre is just 150m south-west from the site at the junction of Heene Road and Rowlands Road.

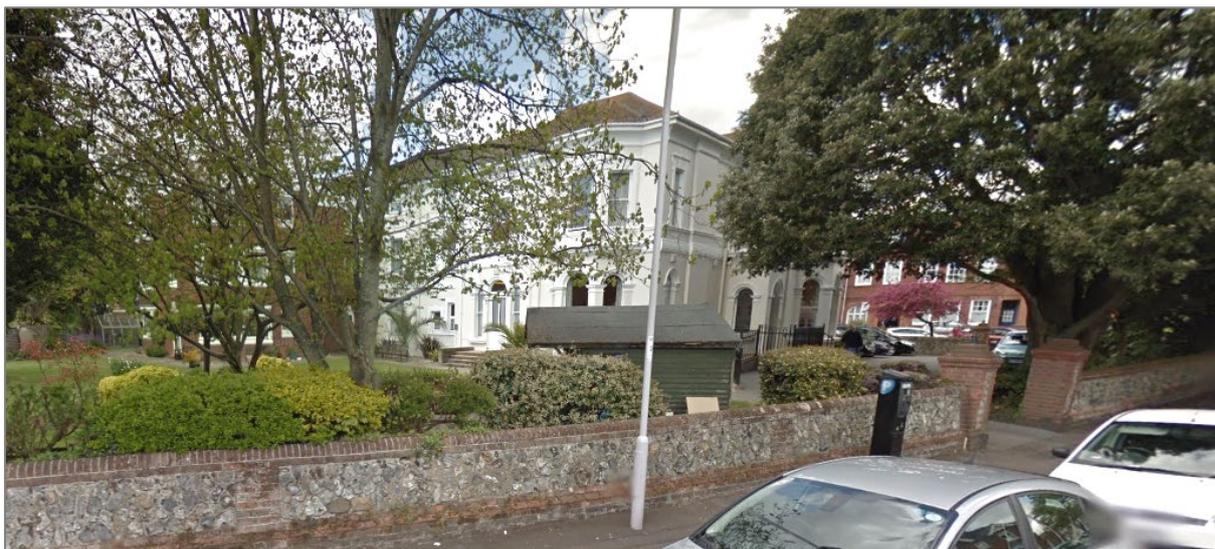
- 3.19 The Shelley Road cycle lane passes directly in front of the site, connecting directly to the Town Centre and the town's wider cycle network.
- 3.20 There are numerous bus stops in proximity of the site, including on Rowlands Road and Hene Road. Worthing train station can be reached on foot in around 15 minutes and on cycle in around 5 minutes.
- 3.21 The seafront is located from 300m to the south. Amelia Park is located 300m to the north-east and Victoria Park is located 350 m to the north. Worthing pier can be reached on cycle in around 5 minutes.

Application site and immediate street scene

- 3.22 The overall application site is a large residential corner plot with vehicular access opening to the north onto Shelley Road and to the east onto Southey Road.
- 3.23 The overall property comprises of 2 parts – an original large 2.5-storey residential building of historic character, located centrally within the plot, and a 3-storey modern apartment block appended to the western side of the original building.
- 3.24 A generous driveway/parking area is present to the north and east of the building whilst a large lawn and garden area is present to the south. The modern apartment element extends within close proximity of the western boundary.
- 3.25 The original (eastern) part of the building has a hipped roof and is finished in pale render.
- 3.26 An entranceway with ramped access is present on the eastern elevation.



Above: Public view to south of the application building from Shelley Road. (© Google).



Above: Public view to west of the application building from Southey Road. (© Google).

- 3.27 The site has a boundary wall of red brick and front. A gated access way is present in the south-west corner opening onto Southey Road.
- 3.28 Much of the wall is backed by bushes and mature trees, particularly along Southey Road.
- 3.29 The neighbouring sites to the west are 2no 4-storey modern apartment blocks.
- 3.30 The GF level of the eastern part of the building (to which the current application relates) is currently vacant.
- 3.31 The upper levels of the eastern part of the building and the entirety of the western part of the building comprises self-contained flats.
- 3.32 The application building is observed within views along Shelley Road. The original part of the building contributes positively within these views whilst the western part of the building corresponds to the neighbouring modern apartment blocks. Views when approaching from the west are obscured by trees. See images below.



Above: Public street-level view to west along Shelley Road. Application building indicated. (© Google).



Above: Public street-level view to east along Shelley Road. Application building indicated. (© Google).

3.33 Views when approaching from the south on Southey Road are similarly obscured by trees. See image below.



Above: Street-level view to north from Southey Road on the approach to the site (indicated). (© Google).

- 3.34 The northern elevation of the application building can be partly seen in the backdrop of views south along Shakespeare Road. Predominantly it is the modern (western) part of the building that can be seen. The eastern part is mainly obscured in these views by trees and buildings on the eastern side of Shakespeare Road. See image below.



Above: Public view to south along Shakespeare Road. Application site indicated. (© Google).

4 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 There is the following planning history available for the application site.
- 4.2 02/01289/FULL - *Replace existing external kitchen door with PVCu sash window to match existing and modification of existing door to store to accommodate revised floor level and new external steps* – approved 10th January 2003.
- 4.3 01/01163/FULL - *Formation of external door to south elevation of original building* – approved 19th December 2001.
- 4.4 01/00911/FULL - *Installation of white replacement PVCu windows to original part of premises* – approved 17th October 2001.
- 4.5 01/00639/FULL - *Removal of existing bin and scooter store and construction of a new, larger, timber clad store with cedar single roof* – approved 29th August 2001.
- 4.6 01/00626/FULL - *Installation of replacement white PVCu windows and doors (retention and refurbishment of existing sliding sash windows to original part of premises) and provision of access ramp* – approved 6th August 2001.

5 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The application proposes conversion of the existing vacant ground floor of the eastern part of the building into 3no C3 units.

6 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 In this instance, the main planning considerations are:

- Principle of the development;
- Standard of accommodation for occupants;
- Impact on neighbouring amenity;
- Impact on highways;
- Sustainable transport.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Housing delivery

6.2 The proposal will result in a net gain of 3no new C3 units.

6.3 As a general principle of development, residential development within a settlement boundary should be appropriate and acceptable from the outset.

6.4 The building comprises residential units and, therefore, the proposed C3 use is the most appropriate for the site. Moreover, the proposed flatted stye of development will accord with the residential character of the surrounding site and wider locality.

6.5 The Local Plan identifies that '*the need to deliver housing will be a priority*' for WBC. Moreover, it is an overarching objective of the NPPF to boost the supply of homes.

Decision-making context

6.6 NPPF Paragraphs 10-11 identify the presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the NPPF. Paragraph 11 c) of the NPPF applies which states: 'For decision taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay '.

6.7 It is readily demonstrated herein that the proposal is fully compliant with the relevant local policies.

Scale of development - Paragraph 73

6.8 The proposal represents a small / medium windfall development.

6.9 The current (and former) NPPF is clear and explicit within Paragraph 73 that '*great weight*' is due to small and medium scale developments:

'73. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:...

d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.'

6.10 It is noted that the revised wording specifically references small/medium enterprise developers, such as the appellant, and the essential role of small/medium sites to housing delivery.

6.11 The Government website clarifies that

'the Government are strengthening the wording in the NPPF at paragraph 73 to make the importance of allocating small sites to small to medium sized housebuilders clear, and intend to give further consideration to how policy can better support small site development as part of work to produce a set of national policies for decision making in 2025'.

6.12 The proposals clearly qualify within the class of development (and developer) that the Government are explicitly seeking to support via the revised NPPF.

6.13 The proposal represents a small windfall development.

An imperative to optimise existing sites within WBC

6.14 The proposal introduces 3no additional C3 units to an existing site (without compromising amenity for the existing neighbouring units – see further below).

6.15 Thus, the principle of the proposed development is fully supported.

STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION FOR OCCUPANTS (DM1, DM2, DM5)

Internal amenity

6.16 DM2 'Density' states the following with regards to internal space standards:

'd) New dwellings across all tenures will be expected to meet as a minimum, the nationally described space standards (or any subsequent Government update) for internal floor areas and storage space.'

6.17 DM5 'Quality of the built environment' also states the following:

5.68 Whilst the most effective and efficient use of land and buildings is positively encouraged this must not be at a cost of unacceptable loss of amenity for existing and future residents'.

6.18 DM1 'Housing mix' addresses the standard of accommodation for units resulting from the conversion/subdivision of an existing dwelling. In this instance the proposal does

not result in the loss or subdivision of a specific dwelling , however, the spirit of the policy in this regard may still be considered relevant to the application. DM1 includes the following:

‘f) When considering proposals for the conversion of dwellings into smaller units of self-contained accommodation, the proposal must provide a high standard of accommodation that complies with internal space standards... the Council will consider: ... iv) the quality of the accommodation.’

6.19 The relevant excerpt of the tabulated National Standards is presented below.

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (sq.m)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey residential units	2 storey residential units	3 storey residential units	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5

Above: Extract from the Nationally Described Space Standards.

6.32 The proposed units can be compared against the national standards as presented in the following table.

Unit	No. of bedrooms	No. of occupants	National standard (m ²)	Proposed GIA (m ²)
Studio 1	1	1	37.0	39.0
Studio 2	1	1	37.0	41.0
Flat 3	1	1	39.0	57.0

Table 1: Proposed unit sizes vs National standards, for comparative purposes

6.20 The proposed units all exceed the relevant national standards. Regarding Studio 1 and Studio 2, the proposed 39.0m² and 41.0m² (respectively) exceed the 37m² indicated as appropriate for a 1-storey 1B1P unit with a shower room. Regarding Flat 3, the proposed 57.9m² exceeds the 39.0m² indicated as appropriate for a 1-storey 1B1P unit with a bathroom. As such, this is a solid indication that the proposal would provide sufficient floorspace to be considered acceptable for residential accommodation.

6.33 Turning to bedroom sizes, the national standards require a double bedroom to be at least 11.5m² and a single bedroom to be at least 7.5m². The proposed bedroom in the 1B2P unit exceeds 11.5m².

6.34 The scheme demonstrates a functional arrangement and layout which achieves good functionality and internal amenity levels for future occupants.

6.35 Each unit would benefit from generous levels of natural light.

External amenity

6.21 The units would benefit from use of shared communal space.

6.22 Regardless, it has been identified within Section 3 how the site is within good proximity of the seafront and reasonable walking distance of parks, open space and the diverse amenity provision of Worthing's central resort area generally.

6.23 There is also ready access to the National Park via public transport.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURING AMENITY (DM1, DM2, DM5)

6.24 DM5 is relevant to the assessment of impacts on neighbouring amenity and states that:

'a) All new development (including extensions, residential annexes, alterations, ancillary development, change of use and intensification) should:

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'.

6.25 DM2 is also relevant and states that, in relation to optimum density of a development, *'Particular consideration must be given to: ... iv) the need to minimise environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers'.*

6.26 DM1 considers the impacts resulting from the conversion/subdivision of an existing dwelling. In this instance the existing site is not a specific dwellinghouse, however, the spirit of the policy in this regard may still be considered relevant to the application. DM1 f) iii) includes consideration of *'the impact on the amenity of adjoining dwellings'.*

6.27 In this instance, due to the layout of the site and the arrangement of the building, neighbouring sites would constitute the existing residential units of the upper levels and western part of the building.

6.28 It can be comprehensively demonstrated that the proposal would have no unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity, as follows.

Privacy

6.29 The proposal would not introduce any new windows and would not result in any views that are not already possible.

6.30 Regardless, the existing windows only offer direct views out over the surrounding garden space and parking area.

6.31 There would therefore be no detrimental impact on existing neighbour privacy.

Noise

6.32 The proposed residential use would be consistent with the numerous neighbouring residential units that comprise the remainder of the existing building and the surrounding locality generally.

6.33 It is not anticipated that any harmful noise disturbance impacts should result.

6.34 Regardless, there is ample legislation outside of planning to combat unneighbourly behaviour.

Light, outlook and enclosure

6.35 There would not be any notable external works and therefore no plausible cause for the proposal to result in enclosure, loss of light or harm to outlook for neighbouring sites.

IMPACT ON HIGHWAYS (DM5)

6.36 DM5 is also the relevant policy for assessing highways impacts (including parking, journeys by car and road safety) and requires that new developments:

'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);'

6.37 DM5 viii) further identifies that development should avoid giving rise to *'vehicular movements resulting in severe cumulative impacts on the road network'*.

6.38 There would be no inherent requirement for occupants to require daily use of a private vehicle, given the sustainability of the location and the ready access to public transport (see below and Section 3).

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT (DM5, DM15)

6.39 DM15 'Sustainable transport & active travel' states that:

a) 'Worthing Borough Council will promote and support development that prioritises active travel by walking, cycling, Non-Motorised User routes and public transport, and reduces the proportion of journeys made by car. This will help to achieve a rebalancing of transport in favour of sustainable modes...'

6.40 DM5 vi) is also relevant (wording presented above in relation to impacts on highways).

- 6.41 It has been detailed in Section 3 how the site has excellent proximity to the shops and services of the Town Centre, all of which can readily be reached on foot.
- 6.42 The site also has direct access to the town's cycle network and good proximity to public transport.
- 6.43 The locality is therefore eminently suited towards supporting sustainable lifestyles.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 In conclusion, it can be demonstrated that the proposal would:

- Contribute to housing supply – small scale developments must be given great weight;
- Result in a net gain of 3no new C3 units;
- Provide sustainable residential development at an appropriate density;
- Optimise the potential of the site;
- Have no detrimental visual impact;
- Not result in any harm to the existing residential amenity;
- Exceed relevant internal amenity standards;
- Exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards;
- Be located within excellent proximity of public services and outdoor amenity areas;
- Be accessible to numerous modes of sustainable transport;
- Not result in any demonstrable harm;
- Represent a sustainable development;
- Be in full accordance with the NPPF.

7.2 Accordingly, we respectfully urge the LPA to issue planning permission without delay.

7.3 **In the spirit of Paragraph 38 of the NPPF, should the LPA wish to discuss any aspects of the proposal, please contact the agent directly.**