

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0221/25

Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Dolphin Court Shelley Road Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Reconfiguration of communal internal space to provide 3No. 1 bedroom additional residential dwellings (Class C3)

Date of site visit: 11.04.2025

Neighbours checked: Y – By Site Notices (x3)

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a large, 2-storey, stuccoed Victorian villa occupying a corner plot on the south side of Shelley Road to the west of its junction with Southey Road. The villa lies to the north and east of the plot and was extended somewhat insensitively in the mid-1970s on its west/south side by substantial 3-storey, brick-built extensions. A landscaped garden lies to the south of the main buildings with trees and shrubs growing alongside the roadside frontages behind a traditional flint and brick-dressed wall. There is a small car park in the far north-east corner of the site with accesses onto Shelley Road and Southey Road. A covered bin/scooter store located to the north side of the villa is screened from Shelley Road by planting.

At the time of the officer site visit the building was vacant and undergoing extensive refurbishment works throughout. Until earlier this year, when it was sold, the building was owned and managed by a local charity, Guild Care, providing accommodation for elderly persons consisting of 29 'flatlets' (each with a kitchenette and bathroom) and 3 larger flats with separate bedrooms (32no flats in total) plus communal facilities.

The surrounding area is residential in character made up of purpose-built and converted flat buildings and also several of residential/nursing care homes.

The property is not listed, locally listed or within a conservation area. There are no TPO trees on the site.

Proposal

Permission is sought to convert part of the ground-floor of the original villa building which was previously used for communal facilities serving the elderly persons' accommodation, to provide 3no self-contained flats (35 units in total).

No external alterations are proposed. The roofed store on the north side of the building is to be retained, to be used for bin and cycle storage.

The refurbished accommodation (including the flats the subject of this application) are currently being marketed online for occupation for rent.

Relevant Planning History:

The most recent planning records date from 2000/2001 and relate only to minor external alterations and replacement windows.

The planning history is unclear as to when the original villa was subdivided into flatlets. Although planning records dating from the mid-1970s relating to the erection of the 3-storey extensions to the building refer to the provision of 'old person's flatlets', there are no conditions controlling or restricting occupancy of the units to older persons.

Consultations:

WSCC: The Local Highway Authority has raised no objection, commenting:-

"This application seeks the reconfiguration of existing internal communal space to provide three additional one-bedroom residential dwellings. The site is located on Shelley Road, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

No alterations are proposed to the existing vehicular access arrangement. The proposed development is not anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of movements to or from the site.

No details of vehicular parking have been provided, although there does appear to be an existing off-street car parking area within the site. It has not been specified whether parking will be allocated for the proposed residential use. Nevertheless, under WSCC Parking Standards, the proposed development would create demand for two additional car parking spaces. Were this to be accommodated on-street, there are comprehensive parking restrictions in place that prohibit vehicles from parking in places that would be detrimental to highway safety. The LHA does not anticipate that parking on-street for this development would give rise to a highway safety or parking capacity issue, but the LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts from an amenity point of view.

Weight is given to the fact the site is situated in a sustainable location that is within walking/cycle distance of local services, amenities and public transport connections. The LHA would request that secure cycle parking provision be provided if there is space within the site to do so.

In summary, 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 116), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.”

Southern Water: No objection.

WSP: No objection.

Adur & Worthing Councils:

The **EHO (Public Health)** no objection in principle subject to a condition controlling hours of construction work to implement the development.

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036 (WBC 2023): Policies:
SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
SS1 (Spatial Strategy)
DM1 (Housing Mix)
DM2 (Housing Density)
DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment)
DM15 (Sustainable Transport and Active Travel)
DM16 (Sustainable Design)
DM17 (Energy)

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPD 'Space Standards' (WBC 2012)
SDP 'A Guide to Residential Development' (WBC 2013)
CIL Charging Schedule (Aug 2021)

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The Worthing Local Plan was adopted on 28th March 2023 (base date of Plan 2020). 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 78 of the NPPF (2024) requires that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should, in addition, include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or

b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply; or

c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of the Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.

The most recent [5 Year Housing Land Supply](#) (5YRHLS) position for Worthing (as at 01/04/2023) demonstrates a 6.3 years supply.

The most recent Housing Delivery Test (HDT) 2023 (published December 2024) shows that Worthing scored 107% and therefore faces no consequences from the HDT.

Having a 5YRHLS position and having passed the HDT with no consequences means that for Worthing 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'*.

There is no objection in principle to the proposed development which would provide much-needed additional housing provision within a highly sustainable location on the edge of the town centre.

Residential Amenity – Future Occupiers

Policy DM2(d) requires all new dwellings (including those created through subdivision and conversion) to meet the Government's minimum internal floor space standards.

The two smaller flats have a GIA of 39sqm and 41 sqm respectively. In both cases the bedroom is below the size threshold to be considered a double bedroom but meets the minimum standard for a 1-bedroom, 1-person flat unit.

The other flat has a GIA of 57sqm, with a double bedroom and meets the minimum floor area required for a 1-bedroom, 2-person unit.

One of the flats would have a sole north-facing aspect. The outlook from the main living/kitchen room serving this unit is further curtailed by the proximity of the existing roofed bin/cycle store sited to the north. An amended plan has been received showing the introduction of a lattice fence to provide screening between the store and the windows. The heads of the windows in question (within an original part of the building) extend above the eaves/gutter height of the roofed storage structure. The shape and narrow floor plan of the existing building does not particularly lend itself to an alternative layout. Although not ideal, it is considered an adequate standard of daylight and outlook would be provided to the occupiers of this flat.

A better standard of amenity is provided to the other 2 proposed flats which are each provided with a dual aspect.

Residential Amenity - Neighbours

The proposed additional flat units form part of a larger complex of flats on the site which have been undergoing refurbishment. The proposed new flats will adjoin existing flat units directly above and to the east within the same building. No additional windows or door openings are proposed. The proposed flats are remote from other neighbouring properties outside of the site and there will be no adverse impacts on residential amenity.

Visual Amenity

No external alterations to the existing building(s) are proposed and consequently there are no adverse impacts for the visual amenity of the area.

Access and Highways

The existing car park is modest in size, providing provision for approximately 5 or 6 vehicles (bays are not marked out). No additional car parking provision is proposed, and the LHA has raised no objection to this. The site is sustainably located within walking distance of the town centre and Worthing rail station, and several bus routes nearby.

Cycle storage is provided within the roof store to the north side of the building.

Sustainable Development

Worthing Local Plan policy DM16 encourages all development to achieve a minimum 20% CO2 reduction compared to the Building Regulations Part L (2013) standard through energy efficiency measures.

Policy DM17 requires all development resulting in new housing (including changes of use) to incorporate renewable and/or low carbon energy production equipment to meet at least 10% of predicted total energy requirements.

SAP calculation reports have been submitted to demonstrate compliance with Part L the Building Regulations (2021) with each proposed unit achieving an EPC of 63-67 (D). This falls short of the EPC C-rating sought by policy DM16 but is considered adequate given the older fabric of the converted building. The compliance letter makes it clear that these results are depended on the provision of heating and domestic hot water to be provided by ASHPs. These can be secured as a condition of planning permission.

BNG

No external alterations or areas of additional hard surfacing are proposed. The development meets the 'de minimis' exemption for BNG.

CIL

These proposals involving the re-use of existing floor area are not CIL liable.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Prior to first occupation of any proposed flat the screen fence shown on the approved plans 2024-29-25 and 2024-29-20a shall be provided and thereafter permanently retained in situ.
3. Prior to first occupation of any proposed flat the ASHPs shown on the approved plan 2024-29-20a shall be installed. Prior to installation details of the make and model of the proposed ASHPs (including an assessment of noise emissions) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA except where the proposed ASHPs meet all the criteria for 'permitted development' set out in Class G Part 14 of the GPDO.
4. Hours of construction

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 12.06.2025

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 12/06/2025