

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0415/26

Recommendation: – Approve

Site: 26 Lavington Road Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Application to revert the two existing flats back into a single dwellinghouse

Date of Site Visit: 30.06.2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings

The site relates to a semi-detached property located on the north side of Lavington Road. It contains separate flats at ground floor and first floor level, both of which are accessed via the main entrance door at the front of the property. There is a front garden area with access to a driveway and garage building which is located towards the rear of the site, and a separate rear garden.

Proposal

Permission is sought for the conversion of the building from two 1-bedroom flats to a single dwelling house. The layout proposes a two-bedroom and study dwelling. External alterations are limited to the blocking up of a side door to the east elevation.

Planning History:

WB/887/84/EU Application for and EUC for use of property as two flats. Granted 30.11.1984

Consultations

The **Highway Authority** has commented as follows:

This application to revert the two existing flats back into a single dwellinghouse. The site is located on Lavington Road, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph. Following an inspection of the application documents, WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) raises no highway safety concerns for this application.

There are no apparent visibility concerns at the existing access point. As this is the conversion of two flats into one dwelling, the LHA does not anticipate that the proposed development would give rise to a significant material intensification of movements to or from the site.

The site will retain an existing driveway with spaces for up to four cars. The WSCC Car Parking Demand Calculator indicates that a dwelling of this size in this location would require at least three car parking spaces. Therefore, the LHA is satisfied with the proposed level of parking provision. Additionally, the existing garage will be used to provide secure cycle parking provision in accordance with WSCC Parking Standards.

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 has made the following comments:

Southern Water has determined that the flow rate for the above site will remain consistent, so capacity is not an issue, and no Southern Water assets will be affected. Therefore, Southern Water has no objections to this proposal. Please note surface water should not be disposed of into a public foul sewer and must comply with the Hierarchy of H3 of the Building Regulations. For more details, refer to the Drainage and Waste Disposal: Approved Document H on the GOV.UK website. Any new connections to the public sewerage system will require a New Sewer Connection application (also known as a Section 106) to be submitted and approved by Southern Water. Due to legislative changes effective from 1st October 2011 regarding the ownership of sewers, it is possible that some previously private sewers, now deemed public, could be crossing the above property and may not be shown on Southern Water records. Therefore, if any additional sewers are discovered during construction, an investigation will be required to determine their condition, the number of properties served, and potential access methods before any further work can proceed on site.
Website: southernwater.co.uk or by email at: SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk

The Council's **Environmental Health** Officer has recommended a condition limiting hours of construction. No objection raised.

Private Sector Housing – no comments received.

The Council's **Drainage Consultant** has commented as follows:

Thank you for your consultation on the above site. We have reviewed the application as the drainage consultant acting on behalf of the Council and wish to make the following comments.

The applicant is applying to revert the two existing flats back into a single dwellinghouse. The application is to Worthing Borough Council.

Following a review of the submitted information, we have no objection on surface water grounds. Due to the size, site, location and type of development, we would recommend the approval of the application.

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan (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)

DM20 (Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage)

DM22 (Pollution)

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)

National Planning Practice Guidance

SPD 'Space Standards' (WBC 2012)

Planning Assessment:

The planning history indicates that the use as two separate flats dates back to at least the 1980's when the established use certificate was granted. The proposals would result in the loss of one residential unit. Policy DM1 seeks to resist the loss of existing residential accommodation (use class C3) and states that:

Planning applications that result in the loss of residential accommodation will not be permitted unless one or more of the following exceptions apply:

i) it can be demonstrated that the accommodation cannot be renovated to achieve satisfactory housing standards;

ii) the proposal would result in a net gain in units of affordable housing;

iii) the loss would enable residential units to be enlarged to meet residential space standards;

iv) the proposed change of use will provide a local community service/ facility that meets an identified need;

v) it can be demonstrated that a proposed change of use is the only practicable way of preserving the special architectural or historic interest of a listed building or other building of heritage significance; or

vi) applications for the conversion of flats or Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) back to family sized homes will be considered on their merits taking account of other considerations including, for example, amenity considerations and evidence regarding the need for family homes.

Criteria (vi) is the most relevant in this case relating to the conversion of the existing flats into a single dwelling house.

As set out in Worthing's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), the trend for new dwellings has been for smaller units which "contributes to above average levels of overcrowding and constraints growth in family households". It is noted that there is a need for the following mix of units

- 1 bed dwellings - 5-15%
- 2 bed dwellings - 40-45%
- 3 bed dwellings - 35-40%
- 4 bed dwellings - 10-20%

The updated SHMA (July 2025) suggested mix of housing by tenure for 4+ bedrooms is 15%, 3-bedrooms is 40%, 2-bedrooms is 40% and 1-bedroom is 5%.

In terms of the existing accommodation, it is noted that the first floor flat would not meet the current space standards in terms of its overall floorspace (approximately 46 sqm) for a 1 bedroom 2 person flat, as the bedroom space would allow, and there also appears to be no separate amenity space for the first floor flat. It is also noted that as the flats were formed in the 1970's/80's it is unlikely that the conversion works would meet modern day insulation standards notably with regard to sound attenuation between the two flat units.

Whilst the layout proposes two double bedrooms and one smaller study/bedroom, the Guide to Residential Development SPD recognises that some larger 2-bedroom dwellings would still provide for family accommodation. Although the proposals would technically result in the loss of one dwelling, one larger dwelling would be formed which would be capable of family occupation. The two larger bedrooms would exceed double bedroom standards. Although the third study/bedroom would not meet the current space standards as a single bedroom, it is recognised that this would appear to be the original layout and mirrors that of other matching dwellings in the vicinity of the site. It is considered that the proposal would provide a suitable layout for family occupation and with direct access to ample private amenity space.

The conversion would be achieved largely by internal alterations, with external alterations limited to the blocking up of one side door which would be towards the rear of the building and would have no significant visual impact or impact on residential amenity. Its use as a single dwelling would be in keeping with the character of the area.

The conversion would not cause any significant detrimental impact to neighbouring occupiers in terms of the intensity of the use compared with the existing use as two flats, or as a result of the external alterations.

The site is located in a sustainable location with access to local services, amenities and public transport connections. There would be no changes to the existing parking and access arrangement with four car parking spaces indicated and sufficient space to accommodate cycle parking within the existing garage. No objection has been raised by the Highway Authority.

In relation to drainage and flood risk, parts of the rear garden are identified as being at future risk from surface water flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been provided which identifies that the degree of surface water risk is within the rear garden only, there is no increase in footprint or occupancy of the building, the proposals do not increase the flood vulnerability, and safe access/egress is maintained.

Conclusion

The reversion of this property to a single dwelling would be consistent with the character of the area. The property is well placed in relation to local services and facilities, and the proposals would provide a suitable standard of family housing for future occupiers.

Therefore, on balance, notwithstanding the loss of a dwelling unit, it is considered that this is outweighed by the benefits of providing a family sized home in a sustainable location which would meet an identified need and be consistent with the established suburban character of this locality, and the proposal can be accepted.

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to condition(s):-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Construction hours
4. Matching materials

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.
- SW – sewer connection
- SW – sewer investigation
- New address

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

Case Officer: Rebekah Hincke Date: 14.07.2026

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 14/07/2026