Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0317/25 Recommendation: APPROVE

Site: Merriman Grange 102 Warren Road Worthing West Sussex BN14 9QX

Proposal: Display of 2 no. non-illuminated monolith signs; 1no. flagpole sign;. 1.no lettering sign on the front elevation of the building; temporary 4no. non-illuminated boards on fence (retrospective application).

Date of Site Visit: 27/03/2025

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Site and Surroundings

The site is located on the northern side of Warren Road, the A24/A27. The site contains a large, recently completed, part three- part four--storey care home. Adjacent to the site to the east is a bridleway.

This section of the A27 is predominantly residential in character and is a single carriageway. Further to the east towards Lyons Farm retail park the character is more commercial and the road becomes a dual carriageway.

Proposal

The following description of the development has been taken from the covering letter:

"A number of permanent and temporary advertisements have since been installed and these do not currently have the benefit of advertisement consent. Following recent discussions with the Council's Planning Department, it was agreed that the number of advertisements and flagpoles installed on the site should be reduced. The applicant has since undertaken these works. This application therefore seeks retrospective consent for those advertisements that remain in situ. These advertisements comprise the following:

1. Two monolith signs (unilluminated), positioned either side of the entrance drive to the care home. The proposed signs operate as a pair and are intended for wayfinding and identification purposes to benefit visitors to the site travelling in both directions along Warren Road The signs are fixed to the ground and each measure 2.5 metres in height by 1.1 metre in width.
2. Four fencing boards which are erected at regular intervals on the fencing that fronts Warren Road. These signs are each 3 metres in length and 1.5 metres in height. The signs

are to be displayed for a temporary period of 12 months to assist in marketing the site to prospective care home residents and their families/carers.
3. One flagpole sign positioned adjacent to the frontage to Warren Road. The flagpole is 3 metres in height, with the banner being 1.8 metre in height and 0.7 metre in width.
4. Gold metallic lettering displaying the name of the care home on the entrance frontage. The individual letters are no greater than 20cm in height"

Representations:

Four objections received:

- Signage is inappropriate for a residential area.
- The flagpole and boards are there for advertising purposes.
- I would suggest any signs should be limited to what is required to inform visitors of the location, be only as large as necessary.
- Illumination has not been requested but should be dealt with in this application
- Further advertising signage has appeared. A yellow sign has been affixed to a street post and portable placards have been placed on the pavement. These signs constitute a distraction to passing drivers. They litter this residential area.
- Other similar care homes comply with planning regulations by having discreet, informative signs.
- Our property is directly south, opposite the main entrance of this development. We have been in residence for 32 years & have probably been effected more than any other home during the building phase & will see the greatest impact going forward.
- Objections relating to overall development
- It was therefore disappointing to see the installation of signage, billboards & flagpoles along the entire frontage
- It currently has the appearance of a business park or industrial estate, rather than a residential care home.
- Warren Road is a busy highway that accommodates the A27/A24 trunk road. However it is a residential area & planning restrictions to signage & advertising hoardings should be enforced as they are in every other residential area of Worthing.
- The monolith signs either side of the entrance are 3.3 metres (11 feet) high. They face directly onto our house & tower above the new developments own boundary fence which stands 2.2 metres tall. They are unnecessarily high & should be restricted (as a minimum) to the height of the boundary fence in order to mitigate the visual impact.

- And for the purpose of reference & comparison we can provide a picture of the signage outside a care home in Offington Drive (less than 150 metres around the corner) that is functional, unobtrusive & much more appropriate.
- We object to the installation of flagpole(s) for the same reason. They have been used purely to display advertising banners.
- We have no particular objection to the large (5 x 1.5 metres) billboards on the boundary fence provided these are only to be displayed for an agreed limited time period during the initial opening phase of the care home.
- The signage on the front elevation of the building "MERRIMAN GRANGE LUXURY CARE HOME" at the level of the third story is not in keeping with a residential development & detracts from all the efforts to assimilate the building with surrounding residential dwellings.
  The areas of concern we have highlighted are reasonable, easy to fix & no more than one should expect from a considerate neighbour.
- This repurposed two residential properties. Now there is installation of significant advertising boards. I oppose the creep of development being proposed. This was a residential area and now is being used for commercial advertising. The project has already breached original planning applications multiple times - inappropriate use of bridleway. These properties originally had trees only in view of the road. Now advertising boards.

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan 2023: Policies DM5, DM6
County Highways Internal Guidance Note Illuminated Adverts Standing Advice (March 2025)
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

Planning Assessment

Principle

In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 A local planning authority shall exercise its powers in the interests of amenity and public safety.

Policy DM6 states that “express consent will only be granted for advertisements which respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and do not create a danger or hazard to public safety”.

Amenity
The signage is prominent in the streetscene with a variety of different forms.

The two most prominent signs are the two monolith signs on either side of the entrance. These are approximately 3.3 metres tall and provide information about the care home. They are considered to be an acceptable height and width to provide information on the care home.

The flagpole similar provides advertising related to the business. The flagpole provides information further to the east from the monolith boards and at a different height which helps to reduce the prospective clutter in one location.

The four fence signs are temporary in nature. The applicant has requested consent for one year to help advertise the business to prospective residents. This is considered acceptable and will be conditioned accordingly.

The signage on the building indicates the building name and is of a different appearance than the rest of the signage. It is an appropriate scale and design given its location on the building.

Objectors have noted that the area is residential and that the signage should be more discrete. The objectors have raised concerns that there is a proliferation of signage which is not in keeping with the residential character of the area likening the signage to a business park. While it is recognised that this is a predominantly residential area, the development is a business and signage is appropriate for advertisement purposes. The site is not in a conservation area and does not affect the setting of any listed buildings. It is considered that the level of signage is appropriate for this business use.

The applicants have not proposed illumination and the signs are already in place. Should an application be made in the future for illumination then this would be assessed on its merits.

Objections raised relate to design and appearance only and it is not considered that the signs would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

The yellow sign on the lamppost as noted in the objection is a planning site notice notifying people of the application and can be removed after the application is decided. The A-boards do not form part of this consent and should be removed. An informative is to be added accordingly.

Public Safety

The signage is located within the site boundaries. They are not illuminated nor in positions where they will distract drivers or be an obstacle for pedestrians. The signage is considered to have no adverse impact on public safety.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1-7 Standard advertisement conditions
8. Approved plans
9. The four signs located on the fence shall be removed in their entirety on or before 19 May 2026 and not be reinstalled at any time.
10. Signs to remain non-illuminated

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

1. Approved without amendment
2. A boards to be removed as not part of this consent

Case Officer: Louise Prew Date: 19/05/2025

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 19 May 2025