

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1463/25

Recommendation: – Refuse

Site: Eagle House 84 High Street Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Enlargement of windows to first floor rear (east) elevation

Date of Site Visit: 13.01.2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N Site notice posted 13.1.2026

Site and Surroundings

The application site is located on the south side of High Street. It contains a two storey purpose-built office building built in the 1990's. The building has a staggered alignment to the street frontage with a small landscaped area with planting to the north side. The main entrance to the building is on the west elevation fronting onto a car parking area to the west where there is also a vehicular access. Works appear to have recently commenced on site following prior approval granted in 2025 for a change of use from offices to form ten new dwellings.

The parking and access to the site is within the Little High Street Conservation Area, with Eagle House building itself sited to the east of the conservation area boundary. The site is within an Archaeological Notification Area. There are no Tree Preservation Orders relevant to this specific site. Part of the site is identified as potentially contaminated land. Part of the car parking for the site is within a Key Office Location connecting to Wicker House to the west where policy DM11 applies.

Proposal

Permission is sought for the enlargement of windows at first floor level. This relates to five windows on the east elevation.

Relevant Planning History:

NOTICE/0013/24 - Application for permitted development for prior approval for change of use from offices (Class E) to 10 residential dwellings (Class C3).

STATUS: Prior Approval Required and Granted 30th June 2025.

AWDM/1149/25 - Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 2 (Contamination) of application NOTICE/0013/24.

STATUS: Pending Consideration .

AWDM/1208/25 - Approval of details reserved by Condition 3 (Drainage) of approval NOTICE/0013/24

STATUS: Application Permitted 20th November 2025.

Consultations

None

Representations

One letter of representation has been received from the occupier of a dwelling in Providence Terrace immediately to the south of Eagle House, raising the following concerns:

- Potential for excessive lighting illuminating the area
- Large windows could impact on privacy of garden and kitchen
- Objection to any masts or security cameras installed.

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023):

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)

DM20 (Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage)

DM22 (Pollution)

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

The first floor layout indicated on the existing plans is as approved under prior approval application NOTICE/0013/24. The relevant windows in the current application relate to units 2, 3 and 4 at first floor level.

It is acknowledged that the existing windows to the east elevation are high level and in consideration of the previous conversion scheme under prior approval Notice/0013/24 the provision of adequate light was considered acceptable on balance. The proposals would clearly improve the standard of accommodation for the flats by providing improved outlook from these units, and would be a particular improvement in this respect for flat 3 where light and outlook as approved would be solely from the existing high level windows. However, the proximity of the windows to the site boundary results in outlook being gained primarily over the neighbouring land which the existing first floor windows appear to have been specifically designed to avoid given the close knit nature of surrounding development.

In terms of the impact to residential amenity, it is noted that the existing high level windows to be replaced are already openable and so the main impact relates to overlooking and loss of privacy as a result of the enlarged windows. To the south,

dwelling in Providence Terrace would be sufficiently remote from the proposed windows to avoid any significant impact given the angle of view. The main impact would therefore be to occupiers of dwellings to the south east in Saw Mill Place and dwellings to the east in Parkside.

In Saw Mill Place there would be a distance of approximately 16 metres between the nearest windows, and the angle of view would limit the impact where those are most closely sited. The proximity of garden areas would result in some overlooking and the particularly close relationship with No.1 is noted. However given the existing intervisibility between dwellings in Saw Mill Place and Parkside and the angle of view, it is considered that the enlarged windows would not cause any significant harm to the privacy of garden areas to neighbouring dwellings.

At Parkside, No.28 is most closely sited to the proposed development and overhangs the car parking area serving these dwellings at the rear. It has clear glazed windows to its rear elevation at first floor level and no side windows directly facing Eagle House. There are dwellings beyond to the east with a similar relationship where there are rear windows across two to three storeys but these dwellings are stepped back in their alignment at the rear and at least 14 metres away from the proposed windows where the angle and distance would limit the impact. At No. 28 however, there would be a distance of between 7 and 10 metres approximately between the closest windows at the rear. Whilst the angle and relationship of those windows closest to No.28 would limit views, towards the southern end of the building the impact would be more apparent to occupiers of No.28. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is a level of intervisibility already in this close-knit group of buildings including from the use of the adjacent communal parking area itself, the particularly close proximity in this rear to side relationship at the site would cause a loss of privacy and increased perception of overlooking to those neighbouring occupiers. Although a condition could be imposed to stipulate obscure glazing, this is not considered reasonable in the circumstances of this case where improved outlook is an intention.

In terms of the impact on visual amenity, the proposed windows would differ in design and proportions to the existing windows at ground floor level for this elevation and whilst there are larger windows existing on the north and west elevations, those proposed would also differ again to those others in their design and proportions, and this would jar with the overall design of windows in the building and have an unbalancing effect on the composition of windows in east elevation. It is acknowledged that the positioning of these particular windows on the east elevation would limit the effect on views from within the conservation area and from High Street to the west, but would be visible from the privately maintained estate road that provides access to the Parkside development of dwellings. As such it is considered the proposed development would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area.

The proposed development is therefore contrary to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan which seeks to protect neighbouring amenity and achieve high quality development.

Recommendation:

REFUSE for the reason:-

1. Having regard to the relationship with neighbouring dwellings, the proposed development would cause an unacceptable loss of privacy, detrimental to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. As such the proposed development would be contrary to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan.
2. The proposed windows would, by reason of their design, proportions and composition, relate poorly to the existing building and represent an unsympathetic form of development, detrimental to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. As such the proposed development would be contrary to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan.

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, allowing the Applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal. The Local Planning Authority has a pre-application advice service in respect of any future application for a revised development.

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

Case Officer: Rebekah Hincke Date: 11.2.2026

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 11/02/2026