

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1270/25 **Recommendation:** REFUSE

Site: **Lyons Farm Retail Park Lyons Way Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Erection of a new retail unit (Class E).**

Date of Site Visit: 19/02/2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: No

Site and Surroundings

The site is located within the established retail park at Lyons Farm. Lyons Farm Retail Park and adjacent Red Square Retail Park contain several big box style retail units accessed off the A27 (Sompting Road).

The proposed unit would be located to the south of the existing Wren Kitchens unit on a grass bank adjacent to the A27.

To The west of the site is Red Square Retail Park with the SCS unit to the rear. Between the two units is a collection of trees.

Residential properties are located to the south side of the A27.

Proposal

The proposal is to erect a retail unit providing approximately 372 sqm of floorspace.

The proposed retail unit will have a contemporary design with red brickwork and a pitched anthracite metal cladding roof. It will be comparable in height to the neighbouring units.

Gabion cages would provide an edge on to the A27 due to the need to provide a retaining wall.

Cycle spaces would be provided to the front and the unit would make sure of the existing car park

Relevant Planning History:

94/05806/OUT - OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF CLASS A1 NON-FOOD RETAIL UNITS (TOTALLING APPROXIMATELY 2,908 SQ.METRES) TOGETHER WITH CAR PARKING, SERVICING, LANDSCAPING AND REVISION TO J SAINSBURY PLC CAR PARKING LAYOUT

STATUS: Application Permitted 7th February 1995.

95/05797/ARM - APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS (DESIGN, EXTERNAL APPEARANCE AND LANDSCAPING ONLY) PURSUANT TO OUTLINE PLANN

STATUS: Application Permitted 26th April 1995.

AWDM/1309/24 - Re-purposing existing car parking spaces for use as parking spaces for recharging of electric vehicles, including the installation of 2 upstands, feeder pillar, 4 bollards, lighting column and associated landscaping adjustments

STATUS: Application Permitted 12th March 2025.

Consultations

Tree And Landscape Officer: I consider that although the trees are no longer present, the section of sloped grass forms important continuity for the roadside landscaping. This section of sloped land, originally intended as part of the landscaping should either be retained as is or re-populated with trees and shrubs. The remaining trees provide some screening for views from the South, but also screen the building of unit 1 (Red Square retail park) from the east along the main road.

Environmental Health: there are no EH objections in principle. The air quality assessment provides mitigation recommendations during the construction phase. I have snipped a few for information. I would recommend these are included in a Construction Management Plan for the development which should be a condition of any permission.

West Sussex County Council

West Sussex County Council (WSCC), in its capacity as Local Highway Authority (LHA), have been consulted on this full application AWDM/1270/25 to assess the highway safety and capacity implications of the proposed development. The application is supported by a Transport Statement (TS) and associated plans.

Site Context and Access Arrangements

The application site is Lyons Farm Retail Park, located to the north of Worthing town, comprising three retail units A, B and C. The development proposal includes construction of a new retail unit (372sqm) at a vacant land to the south, within the retail park.

The existing site access from the southern arm of the Sompting Road mini roundabout will continue. Sompting Road is a private road, which intersects Lyons Way which is a publicly maintained highway subject to 30mph dual carriageway. Visibility splays are achievable along both sides of Lyons Way for the posted speed limit. An inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last 5 years reveals no reported incidents of personal injury immediately near to site access junction with Lyons Way. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing road

layout is operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

Parking and Internal Layout

There are currently 148 car parking spaces, and the scheme proposes no additional car parking spaces. To establish the carpark occupancy levels, a car parking survey was undertaken in June 2025. The survey reveals that even after including proposed trips from the retail unit there is still ample spare capacity unoccupied, maximum occupancy being 51% during AM peak on Friday and 74% during Saturday peak. Any overflow car parking could be accommodated in adjacent car parks, within the wider retail park. Therefore, the Highway Authority are convinced that there would not be any highway safety risk associated with overspill parking.

A Cycle Parking Specification Sheet has been submitted specifying the location and details of the proposed cycle provision. The proposed cycle parking provision for 10 bicycles within two Sheffield stands appears to accord with the requirement set out within WSCC Parking Guidance. Swept path analysis has been carried out for an articulated vehicle, a box van, and a panel van. The analysis demonstrates suitability of the access to accommodate these large vehicles and exit in forward gear.

Sustainability

There is a continuous footway network along Lyons Way providing access to nearby retail units, local services and amenities. The nearest bus stops are located adjacent to Sainsbury's within the wider retail park area, serviced by bus routes 7 and 16. The nearest railway station is Worthing, approximately within 2km distance, providing connectivity to London, Portsmouth, Southampton, Chichester etc. Therefore, the site is in a sustainable location.

Trip Generation and Highway Impact

Traffic surveys were undertaken on a Friday and a Saturday in June 2025 to establish the vehicular trips associated with the development. The proposed development contributes to 12.5% increase on the total retail floor area. Using this percentage increase, the proposed unit is predicted to generate two-way trips of 25 and 23 during the weekday AM and PM hours respectively and 31 during the Saturday peak hour. In reviewing the capacity impact, WSCC recognise that this development will not generate significant additional traffic onto the local highway network which will in result in severe unacceptable impacts.

Conclusion

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) do 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 (NPPF), paragraphs 114 -117, as revised December 2024. Therefore, there are no transport grounds to resist this proposal.

If the Local Planning Authority (LPA) minded approving the application, the following condition should be applied:

Construction Plant and Materials

No development shall be commenced until such time as plans and details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA showing the site set up during construction. This shall include details of all temporary contractor buildings, plant and stacks of materials, provision for the temporary parking of contractor vehicles and the loading and unloading of vehicles associated with the implementation of this development. Such provision once approved and implemented shall be retained throughout the period of construction.

Reason: To avoid undue congestion of the site and consequent obstruction to access.

INFORMATIVES Section 278 Agreement of the 1980 Highways Act - Works within the Highway

The applicant is advised to enter into a legal agreement with West Sussex County Council, as Highway Authority, to cover the off-site highway works. The applicant is requested to contact The Implementation Team Leader (01243 642105) to commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the agreement being in place.

Waste Services: No response

WSP (as drainage consultant):

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

Condition 1: Construction shall not begin until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The surface water drainage scheme must prioritise the use of source control SuDS in consideration of the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and demonstrate no increase in flood risk as a result of the Proposed Development with sufficient supporting evidence provided to support its viability including supporting calculations for the 100% AEP (1 in 1 year), 3.33% AEP (1 in 30 year), 3.33% AEP (1 in 30 year) plus climate change, the 1% AEP (1 in 100 year) and the 1% AEP (1 in 100) plus climate change critical storms. The design should follow the hierarchy of preference for different types of surface water drainage disposal systems as set out in Approved Document H of the Building Regulations, and the recommendations of the SuDS Manual produced by CIRIA. Winter groundwater monitoring and winter infiltration testing to BRE DG365, or similar approved, will be required to support the design of any infiltration drainage. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

Reason: To ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of Adur & Worthing Council.

Condition 2: The development hereby approved shall not be occupied until details of the maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details in perpetuity. The Local Planning Authority shall be granted access to inspect the sustainable drainage scheme for the lifetime of the development. The details of the scheme to be submitted for approval shall include: I. II. III. a timetable for its implementation. details of SuDS feature and connecting drainage structures and maintenance requirement for each aspect including a drawing showing where they are located. a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include details of design life and the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. This will include the name and contact details of any appointed management company. Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and ensure the flood risk is adequately addressed for each new dwelling and not increased in accordance with NPPF and Policies of Adur and Worthing Council.

Southern Water:

Thank you for your correspondence, please see our comments below regarding the above application.

Insufficient Information provided

Construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of foul/surface water drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

Tree planting

We have restrictions on the proposed tree planting adjacent to Southern Water sewers, rising mains or water mains. Reference should be made to Southern Water's publication "A Guide to Tree Planting near water Mains and Sewers" (https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/pddob0vn/ds-tree-plantingguide-1_nwm.pdf) and the Sewerage Sector Guidance (<https://www.water.org.uk/sewerage-sectorguidance-approved-documents/>) with regards to any landscaping proposals and our restrictions and maintenance of tree planting adjacent to sewers, rising mains and water mains.

Condition: In order to protect public apparatus, Southern Water requests that if consent is granted, the following pre commencement condition is attached to the planning permission; The developer must advise the local authority (in consultation with Southern Water) of the landscaping proposals in proximity of public apparatus in order to protect it in accordance with Southern Water's guidance, prior to the commencement of the development.

Source Protection Zone

Please note, A hydrology review is required for the above site due to the site being part of the Inner capture zone. Southern Water are currently undertaking this review and will be InTouch once completed. This may result in no change to the above response or additional requirement

National Highways:

Referring to the consultation on a planning application dated 08 April 2026 referenced above, in the vicinity of the A27 that forms part of the Strategic Road Network, notice is hereby given that National Highways' formal recommendation is that we:

c) recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see reasons at Annex A);

Full comments are provided in their response. but in summary National Highways seeks additional information on the gabion wall structure, a safety risk assessment and would be likely to recommend conditions in respect of geotechnical works, drainage and a CEMP. No surface water can be allowed to drain on to the SRN.

Conclusion

Given the above, it is currently not possible to determine whether the application would have an unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability and/or operational efficiency of the SRN. National Highways currently recommends that planning permission not be granted (other than a refusal if the Council so wishes) for a period of three months until 29 July 2026 to allow the applicant to resolve the outstanding matters. This recommendation can be replaced, renewed, or reviewed during the three-month period, or at its end, dependent on progress made with regards to the outstanding matters.

Neighbour Representations

No. of Contributors	3
No. of Representations	0
No. In Support	0
No. of Objections	3

Two representations were received from local residents on the grounds of:

- Windows face homes and gardens which would result in loss of privacy and perception of being overlooked, windows should be omitted or obscure glazed
- New unit will lead to higher traffic volumes exacerbating queuing and creating further congestion. A traffic impact assessment should be provided and cumulative impacts assessed considering recent Lidl development
- Inadequate parking provision and people will use local streets creating possible hazards with residents, pedestrians and children
- The extended hours of operation, delivery vehicles, and increased activity will result in higher noise levels, particularly during peak hours. Hours should be limited
- Light pollution will disrupt what is currently a peaceful residential area, affecting sleep and overall wellbeing.

- Proposed solutions if minded to approve include more landscaping, a lighting scheme, traffic management and access plan, noise mitigation plan, post verification testing,

One objection received from an adjacent business on the grounds of:

Application site & proposed siting and design

- Erosion of designed and planned landscape buffer will have a harmful detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the locality and the townscape. It forms part of a wider green corridor transition zone and road buffer.
- The proposed building sits above a retaining wall built to the edge of the highway with no set back or separation.
- There is no activation to the southern elevation to the road and will provide an extensive blank elevation directly on the edge of this busy and prominent public route.
- The building will protrude forward of the established building line along the road in this location, harmful to the character, appearance and visual amenity of the area. Existing SCS unit provides appropriate relief from the pavement ensuring it does not deliver an overbearing relationship given the scale and form of the elevation facing the highway. Any building on the application sit should be positioned no further forward than the line of the Lyons Farm Retail Park car park and the SCS unit,
- Proposed design and roof profile of the building, is at odds with that of the immediate neighbouring building adjacent and results in an uncomfortable visual relationship and appearance.
- Blank frontage and retaining wall provide an imposing and uncomfortable relationship in both visual amenity terms and in respect of the experience of its user.
- Contrary to policy DM5.

Trees, ecology and biodiversity

- No consideration is given to the existing trees to the west which provide significant amenity value, with no tree survey or assessment included. If approved they would be hemmed in with no consideration given to their health.
- Details of tree protection measures, buffer zones and working processes in respect of these trees would need to be submitted and approved to ensure that the construction of the scheme could be undertaken without any harm to the trees.
- The proposals fail to meet the requirements of Local Plan Policies DM5, DM6 and DM19 as not respecting existing natural features, and not protecting and incorporating green infrastructure.
- 10% BNG not provided. The proposals actually deliver a significant worsening of the biodiversity as a result of the development with a decline in biodiversity of 65.44%. The proposals include no specific details as to how this will be addressed to deliver the requirements, whilst demonstrating the significant harm that the proposals will do to the biodiversity and ecological value of the site and local area.

Transport, parking and servicing

- The proposed unit does not have a dedicated or separated servicing area like the other units away from the car park. The servicing strategy appears to use an area out of hours from the other uses of the park. However, as The Gym unit is 24/7 it is evident that it would not be able to service the unit when other premises are not operational.
- The servicing strategy is based on the property as a bulky goods unit only, with 7.5t vans as largest vehicle and no more than one servicing trip a day at most. Based on our work with bulky goods retailers it is known that most deliveries are however undertaken by much larger vehicles given the nature and form of bulky goods products, whilst more frequent deliveries will be required with servicing of the unit likely from multiple suppliers and distribution bases.
- No tenant has been identified so these assumptions cannot be justified. Conditions would be required to restrict within E use class, servicing and deliveries as stated.
- Refuse collections not considered which would utilise larger vehicles and would create a conflict internally within the car park and with customers
- Servicing from car park would have residential amenity implications. Wren opening times means servicing would be pre 9am or post 9pm. The potential for noise disruption to residential properties during these hours is extremely high.
- No provision of any disabled parking spaces to enable accessibility
- No provision of electric charging spaces
- Contrary to policy DM15.

External plant and equipment

- No details of external plant and mechanical equipment have been provided it is considered that such details are essential to consider at this application stage. The north elevation is positioned tight up to the Wren unit which is likely to limit plant to the open elevations to the front, rear and south of the building. Plant and equipment units and ducting would have an unacceptable visual appearance.

Residential amenity

- Significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the residents. Harmful impact on the outlook, whilst the servicing proposals will result in increased external activity, noise and disturbance during late night and early morning periods in an exposed location to the residential properties. No noise assessment provided demonstrating how the operation of the unit, any associated plant and equipment and the servicing arrangements from the car park will impact on the residential amenity of these properties. The proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policies DM5 - Quality of the Built Environment and DM22 - Pollution,

Drainage

- No details provided in terms of the sustainable drainage strategy. No information is provided as to how the scheme will maintain existing run-off rates and the sustainable drainage measures that will be required. Given the limited site extent and the scale of the built form, the site does not include any available

areas to provide attenuation to address sustainable drainage requirements. Contrary to policy DM20.

Overdevelopment

- The proposal represents an overdevelopment of the site.

Construction

- No details have been provided and are necessary at this stage given the constrained nature of the site.

Sequential assessment

- The sequential assessment is based on a number of proposed “requirements” set out in Para. 6.4.3. No justification for size requirement when bulky goods operate from much larger units. Figure seems to be taken from size that can be provided rather than operational requirements.
- In addition, the requirements in 6.4.3 set out a need for a “demised at grade customer car park...”, however the application proposal does not fulfill this requirement itself. There are therefore significant concerns that the unit is not of a size and scale suited to the proposed use, whilst the parameters underlining the assessment of sequential sites is neither robust or supported by appropriate evidence. Assessment is not robust. Larger sites which have been discounted due to their size could well suit the floorspace requirements of a bulky goods operator.
- Conclusions of some of the site assessments are highly questionable. For example, in respect of 97-99 Montague Street the assessment discounts the site on the basis of a lack of suitable availability of customer car parking, despite the proximity of the Grafton Multi-Storey car park immediately to the rear of the site and accessible to the side of the premises, and lack of at-grade servicing, despite the ability to access the premises via a ground floor dedicated servicing entrance to the rear of the unit, unlike the application premises which would require servicing through the front customer entrance of the property.
- The application fails to meet the requirements of the NPPF and Policy DM13 as it fails to adequately demonstrate that there are no suitable, available or viable sites within or on the edge of centres that could accommodate a proposed bulky goods retail operation.
- The sequential assessment is based solely on the specifics of a bulky goods non-food retail use rather than Use Class E generally as in description. As previously a condition would be required to restrict to bulky non food goods only

Other matters

- Conflict of interest in WSP as agent and consultee for Council.
- The Design and Access Statement (Para. 6.1 pg 11) references a proposed residential plot which is to be considered in respect of sustainable transport and accessibility of the scheme, and is used to assist in justifying the sustainable location of the site. However, no details of this residential plot are contained and there is no information as to where this residential plot is located and what is proposed to come forward.

Officer's response: Comments are address below. Other than to note that the LPA is satisfied that the various departments of WSP are able to operate independently and are satisfied there is no conflict of interest.

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, SP2, SP3, SS1, SS3, DM5, DM6, DM13, DM15, DM16, DM17, DM18, DM19, DM20, DM21, DM22, National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

Principle of development

The site is at Lyons Farm which is an out-of-town location and proposes a town centre use. The proposal seeks the provision of a new retail unit (Class E) totalling 372 sqm Gross Internal Area (GIA). No end user has been identified but the applicants have referred to the use being for 'bulky goods' and/or a showroom style use and the applicants state that 'therefore offer a range of goods that aren't typically located in the town centre'.

The key local plan policies are:

- Policy SS3 ('Town Centre') seeks to ensure that retail uses are directed to the Town Centre.
- Policy DM13 ('Retail and Town Centre Uses') outlines the hierarchy of town and local centres. Where retail floorspace is proposed outside centres, an impact assessment will be required for proposals over 500sqm (gross). A sequential test is required. In addition, criteria i) states "*Where necessary conditions and / or legal agreements will be applied to any permission accepted outside of defined centres, including defining the nature and extent of the proposed use to ensure no significant adverse impact on existing designated centres.*"

The policy approach is one that supports growth in identified centres and town centre uses should be directed to the town centres first and the key sites. The WLP evidence base (Retail Study 2017 and Update 2020) identifies a need for convenience of 1250sqms and comparison 9200sqms (net) up to 2026. and recognised the opportunity to consolidate and enhance the retail offer in the main town centre. The supporting text to policy DM13 states "*Worthing's Primary Shopping Area and the three sequentially preferable sites (Stagecoach / Union Place / Grafton sites) are the preferred locations for any retail development and other town centre uses. Any applications for retail and other main town centre uses proposed on sites not within the defined frontages would need to demonstrate compliance with the sequential and impact tests.*" It goes on to state "*Local evidence recommends a specific local threshold to ensure that edge and out-of-centre retail development proposals are required to undertake a full and detailed impact assessment for schemes of above 500 sqm (gross). Planning applications for main town centre uses need to be accompanied by an appropriate level of information so as to enable the council to determine whether their impact on existing centres would be acceptable. There may also be need to*

control the type of activities, hours of operation etc. on any permitted out of centre development to ensure there is no adverse impact on existing centres”.

The current proposal for a Town Centre use outside of the identified hierarchy of centres falls below the threshold of 500 sqms that triggers an impact assessment and therefore is only required to undertake a sequential test. The applicants have submitted a sequential test which considers both the nearest identified centre - Broadwater District Centre and for completeness Worthing Town Centre. The applicant states *“This sequential assessment has focussed on assessing sites within and on the edge of the Town Centres within Worthing. Given the size of the store and relatively limited range of products, customers will visit the store on foot and will not walk significant distances to shop at a retail unit. A 300m catchment is, therefore, deemed sufficient to base the sequential test on. This includes Broadwater District Centre and the Downlands Shopping Parade. Although the Worthing Town Centre is outside of this radius, for completeness and following from the Council’s pre-application response, we have also included Worthing Town Centre within our assessment.”*

The applicants have suggested the following requirements were appropriate in relation to the search for sequentially preferable sites:

The requirements for a sequentially preferred site are also as follows:

- *The ability to sell bulky goods from a minimum of 335sqm.*
- *A demised at grade customer car park of an appropriate size is required directly adjacent to the retail unit to allow the safe and direct transfer of goods from store to customer vehicle, in particular for the purchase of bulky goods.*
- *Good accessibility to the strategic highway network and/or in close proximity to other bulky goods store operators providing customers with an ability to compare goods and prices.*
- *The floorspace should be at a single level on a single floor with minimal structural interruptions e.g. columns and pillars to allow for the store to be laid out more like a showroom, selling bulky goods;*
- *Suitable delivery and servicing access and arrangements;*
- *Have an active frontage;*
- *Minimum floor to ceiling height of 2.8-3m; and*
- *Available within the short term.*

A site must meet all of these requirements in order to provide a sequentially preferable alternative site that meets the operators’ requirements and business models.”

They considered the allocated town centre sites and searched agents websites for available sites. The following sites were considered and assessed against the requirements set out above.

- A7 Grafton.
- A11 Stagecoach, Marine Parade.
- A13 Union Place
- 56 Montague Street, Worthing BN11 3HE
- 97-99 Montague Street, Worthing, BN11 3BN
- 105-109 Montague Street, Worthing BN11

- 82-84 Montague Street, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 3HF
- 10 High Street, Worthing, West Sussex BN11
- The Mill Building, 31 Chatsworth Rd, Worthing BN11 1LY
- 6-8 New Street, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 3BT
- 21 Rowlands Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 3JJ
- 79-81 Portland Road, Worthing BN11 1QG
- 56 Montague Street, Worthing BN11 3HE
- 40 Marine Parade, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11
- Ridgeworth House, Liverpool Gardens, Worthing, BN11 1RY

Appendix A of the planning statement has considered each site and indicated whether it's available (within a reasonable time period), suitable and viable. The overall conclusion is that there is no sequential preferable site.

The PPG at paragraph 010 states:

“The checklist below sets out the considerations that should be taken into account in determining whether a proposal complies with the sequential test:

- with due regard to the requirement to demonstrate flexibility, has the suitability of more central sites to accommodate the proposal been considered? Where the proposal would be located in an edge of centre or out of centre location, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. It is important to set out any associated reasoning clearly.*
- is there scope for flexibility in the format and/or scale of the proposal? It is not necessary to demonstrate that a potential town centre or edge of centre site can accommodate precisely the scale and form of development being proposed, but rather to consider what contribution more central sites are able to make individually to accommodate the proposal.*
- if there are no suitable sequentially preferable locations, the sequential test is passed.*

In line with paragraph 86 of the National Planning Policy Framework, only if suitable sites in town centre or edge of centre locations are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered. When considering what a reasonable period is for this purpose, the scale and complexity of the proposed scheme and of potentially suitable town or edge of centre sites should be taken into account.

Compliance with the sequential and impact tests does not guarantee that permission will be granted – all material considerations will need to be considered in reaching a decision.”

Para 011 goes on to state:

“How should locational requirements be considered in the sequential test? Use of the sequential test should recognise that certain main town centre uses have particular market and locational requirements which mean that they may only be accommodated in specific locations. Robust justification will need to be provided where this is the case, and land ownership does not provide such a justification.”

The applicants have met the requirements of the sequential test assuming that the proposed use is for Bulky Goods /Showroom type accommodation as set out in the planning statement. It is acknowledged that the proposed use of Bulky goods/showroom type accommodation has specific requirements that are often difficult to accommodate in town centre locations and it would appear that there are no sequentially preferable sites. The restriction to bulky goods could be conditioned.

Visual Amenity

The proposed unit is located to the south of Wren Kitchens on a landscaped, predominantly grass bank which adjoins the A27. The bank forms part of the transition from the national park in the east to the residential houses on Pines Ave. Over time trees and other plants have been lost but the bank itself still retains its green nature providing an important visual and ecological buffer between the commercial properties and the adjacent road.

The proposed unit would be located forward of the established building line. It is recognised that the unit to the west (ScS) is forward of the Wren building line but that unit retains a landscaped buffer of some 8m between it and the footpath. The proposed unit would project even further to the south placing development immediately adjacent to the footway. The proposed unit would almost entirely remove this landscaped buffer in this location except for a small 1.2m retention of the bank.

As the site is not level, the unit would be elevated above the footway to be level with the car park and the adjacent units. The scheme proposes gabion cages as part of the retaining wall which they have said will be planted to have a softer appearance. This is however not considered to be adequate compensation for the loss of this landscaped verge.

The elevated position would be particularly evident in views from the east and west. The elevated position and gabion cages would be overbearing on pedestrians using the footpath. As noted in the pre-application advice, a development would need to be set back at least in line with the ScS building line to retain an appropriately sized landscaped buffer which it is recognised means a unit is unlikely to be deliverable on site.

The unit would not provide an active frontage to the A27. While this is not unusual in this area the existing units are set further back in their sites with the landscaped buffer in between. This unit would sit much closer to the roadway and present a long blank inactive façade.

The proposed unit would have a modern appearance while retaining some of the characteristics of the existing retail units such as the brick walls. It is recognised that the units to the west within Red Square Retail Park have a more modern appearance than the Lyons Farm units albeit these are within a separate retail park. While a modern design is not unacceptable in principle it contributes to the prominence of the building in the streetscene and appears incongruous.

The proposal is therefore considered to be an overdevelopment of the site shoehorning a unit into a space that cannot accommodate it and is recommended for refusal on this basis.

Residential Amenity

The nearest residential units are located to the south of the site on the southern side of the A27 about 27 metres away. The proposed development is sufficiently separated from these properties so as to not affect levels of daylight or sunlight or outlook.

The south facing windows at ground floor would be elevated resulting in some perceive overlooking of the first floor windows of the neighbours opposite. However, this is unlikely to result in a loss of amenity due to the retail use and the distance of over 28 metres to the nearest residential facades. It is recognised these window face across the road and there is likely to be some visibility of the fronts of these properties from the road / retail park as existing.

Hours of operation would be conditioned in the event planning permission is granted.

Plant has not been addressed and details would have been sought in the event planning permission was granted. Servicing could be adequately conditioned to appropriate hours and sizes of vehicles. There may be additional noise and disturbance associated with an additional unit but due to the surrounding context including noise from the A27 it not considered this would affect residential amenity.

Transport

The application proposes to make use of the existing car park which is shared with The Gym Group, Boots and Wren Kitchens. Parking surveys have been reviewed by WSCC which has concluded there is capacity within the car park for the additional users.

Ten cycle spaces are provided for the new unit providing alternative means of transport to private vehicle use.

National Highways were consulted due to the location on the SRN. They requested additional information be provided which the applicant was given the opportunity to provide. The applicant requested that this could be dealt with by condition. However, as indicated in their consultation response "it is currently not possible to determine whether the application would have an unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability and/or operational efficiency of the SRN". It is therefore not considered appropriate to leave these details to condition and the scheme is recommended for refusal on this basis.

Concerns were raised by an objector about the lack of provision of electric vehicle chargers and accessible spaces. There are spaces within the existing car park for both of these which the users could make use of. No objection was raised on these grounds by WSCC or National Highways.

Concerns have also been raised by objectors about servicing given the unit would not have access to the rear service yard. The limitations on vehicle size and delivery times could be conditioned in the event planning permission was granted.

Sustainable design

Policy DM16 sets out how the development should deliver sustainable design and reduce energy consumption. Policy DM16 provides the following for new non-domestic buildings:

- new non-domestic buildings will achieve a 27% reduction in CO₂ on average per building compared to the Building Regulations Part L 2013 unless superseded by national policy or Building Regulations". The latest 2021 building regulations apply.
- All non-domestic properties (including those created through conversions) should achieve a 'B' rating Energy Performance Certificate.
- All new development should incorporate design measures where appropriate to minimise excessive solar gain and maximise opportunities for passive cooling

The environmental and sustainability strategy is outlined in the DAS and includes themes related to sustainable construction and waste reduction. The statement does not appear to reference the specific policy requirements outlined above. These would be conditioned in the event planning permission is granted.

Biodiversity net gain and ecology

This development would be subject to provide 20% biodiversity net gain in accordance with policy DM18 as the site is considered previously developed land. The baseline indicates that there are 0.14 area units made up of low distinctiveness modified grassland on site. The proposed would provide 0.04 units of urban – ground level planters. This represents a 65% loss on site. The scheme would be required to buy credits to provide the 20% uplift. This would be secured by planning condition.

The tree officer has assessed the proposal and does not have any specific concerns about the remaining trees. If the application were otherwise considered acceptable appropriate conditions would have been included.

Drainage and flooding

The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is not in an area at risk of surface water flooding now or in the future. The application was reviewed by the Council's drainage consultant who was satisfied subject to two conditions to provide further information on drainage. Southern Water requested a condition be attached regarding foul water and surface water drainage and this would have also been attached in the event planning permission was granted. It is noted that National Highways also mentioned that no surface water shall drain on to the A27.

Air quality

The site is within an Air Quality Management Area. An air quality assessment was provided which proposes air quality mitigation measures during construction. These

would be conditioned as part of a CMP had the application been recommended for approval.

CIL

The development would likely not be liable for CIL as it wouldn't fit within "Foodstore/Supermarket/Retail Warehousing development" but this would be confirmed depending on the occupier.

Recommendation:

REFUSE for the reasons:

1. The proposed retail unit, by reason of siting, scale, detailed design and loss of landscaping represents an overdevelopment of the site and would have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the streetscene and surrounding area contrary to policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan and the NPPF.
2. Insufficient information has been provided to determine whether the application would have an unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability and/or operational efficiency of the strategic road network contrary to policy DM15 of the Worthing Local Plan and chapter 9 of the NPPF.

Informative

1. Refused following discussion

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

Case Officer: Louise Prew

Date: 25/06/2026

Authorised by:

Date: