Expiry Date - 24/03/2025

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0082/25 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 43 Church Walk Worthing West Sussex

Proposal: Conversion of building from two flats to a single dwelling house. Removal of front balcony enclosure to reinstate balcony and removal of French door and ground floor rear glazed enclosure

Site and surroundings
The site is located on the northern side of Church Walk and contains a two-storey property with bay windows to the front. The site has had the balcony to the front enclosed and become an extension at the first floor. The site is currently in use as a pair of flats with one on the ground floor and one on the first floor.

The site is not within a conservation area and does not contain a listed building or any protected trees.

Proposal
The proposal is to convert the existing two flats back to the original use of the site and become one property with 3/4 bedrooms.

The front enclosure will be removed and the balcony and doors will be returned to their original design.

Relevant Planning History
AWDM/1796/15 - Replacement UPVC windows to ground and first floor flat on south and west elevations. Refused 17 May 2016.

Consultations:
Environmental Health
No comments but condition recommended for the hours of works.

WSP
The applicant is applying for the conversion of building from two flats to a single dwelling house. Removal of front balcony enclosure to reinstate balcony and removal of French door and ground floor rear glazed enclosure. 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 site, size, location, and type of development we would recommend the approval of the application.

WSCC Highways

This proposal is for the conversion of building from two flats to a single dwelling house. The site is located on Church Walk, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

There are no proposed changes to the existing access onto Church Walk. From inspection of WSCC mapping there are no apparent visibility concerns with the existing access. The proposed development is not anticipated to give rise to a material intensification of use of the existing access point.

The site will retain two existing car parking spaces. 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, any overspill parking would have to be accommodated onstreet.

Whilst on-street parking is limited in the vicinity, there are comprehensive parking restrictions in place prohibiting vehicles from parking places that would be considered a detriment to highway safety. Church Walk is subject to a residents parking permit scheme. The LHA does not anticipate that highways safety would be detrimentally affected through this proposal. However, the planning authority may wish to consider the potential impacts on on-street parking from an amenity point of view.

From inspection of the plans, the parking area is suitably sized. On-site turning does not appear achievable, so cars may have to exit the site in reverse gear. However, this is not anticipated to give rise to an adverse highway safety impact, owing to good forward visibility in this location. The applicant has demonstrated a cycle store, which will 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
Apologies for the confusion, Southern Water has no objections to the proposed works proceeding due to the applicant proposing to use the existing connection.

Representations:
None

Relevant Planning Policies
Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036 (WBC 2023): Policies:
SP1, SS1, DM1, DM2, DM5, DM15, DM16, DM17, DM20, DM22
Nationally Described Space Standards (March 2015)
SPD 'Space Standards' (WBC 2012)
SDP 'A Guide to Residential Development' (WBC 2013)
CIL Charging Schedule (Aug 2021)

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Planning assessment
Principle of development
The proposal would result in the net loss of a dwelling unit comprising a 2 bedroom flat. Policy DM1 seeks to resist the loss of existing homes. The policy 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”. Of the outlined criteria the one most relevant is “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”.

Paragraph 5.17 of the WLP refers to the need to retain existing homes especially larger family homes (3 + beds). It states that there is a need to ensure a range of housing dwelling types and sizes 'to meet the identified housing needs, facilitate housing choice and achieve mixed and balanced communities'. The most recent SHMA was undertaken in 2020 and identifies a need for all different sizes of homes in the market and social housing sectors for Worthing. The need for 4-bedroom family housing is 10-20% and for 2-bedroom flats is 40-45%.

The site is within a sustainable location with good access to public transport and within walking distance of a range of local facilities including shops, schools and public open space.

The property was originally built and occupied as a single family dwelling and when considered on its own merits and in context with the amenity considerations identified below, reverting back to a single unit would be consistent with the aims of Policy DM1 to provide a mix of housing, including larger family homes and with the exceptions listed in e) vi).

Residential Amenity

The alterations to the front balcony are not considered to adversely affect residential amenity. The proposal reinstates the original design which is mirrored by the adjacent property to the east. While it is noted there may be some interlooking between the two units, this relationship is present for the neighbouring houses in the street and is considered acceptable in this instance. .

The conversion back to one dwelling from two flats is not considered to intensify the use due to the potential number of residents still being the same.

To the rear the loss of the existing enclosure will have no impact on the amenities of the neighbours. .

Resultant of this the proposal does not result in any unacceptable level of impact on the neighbouring amenities.

Visual Amenity
The proposal will reinstate the front balcony and French doors. The enclosed balcony to the front of the site will be removed and reverted back to the original open balcony. The doors and balcony will be timber and painted white. . As such this reversion is considered to be an improvement as it removes a historic extension which detracted from the streetscene.

Alterations to remove a later glazed element to the rear are also acceptable.

Sustainability and energy
The scheme mainly proposes internal works to combine the two units. The refurbishment of existing buildings is considered to be a sustainable form of development.

Highways
The application seeks to combine the two flats into one residential property. As such there is a requirement for parking to be at least 2 spaces provided. In this instance they can be comfortable hosted within the front garden space. In addition to this the application proposes the provision of two cycle storage spaces.

CIL
CIL is not payable for the change of use due to the lack of increase in footprint.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard Time Limit
3. Materials to Match Existing
4. Hours of Works
5. Cycle Storage

Informatives

1. Approved Without Amendment
2. SW connection
3. SW sewer maybe on site

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

Case Officer: Finlay Gardner Date: 19/03/2025

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 19/03/2025