Expiry Date - 19/08/2025

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0823/25 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 117 Littlehampton Road Worthing West Sussex BN13 1QU

Proposal: Construction of outbuilding/games room

Site visit: 04.08.2025

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site relates to detached two storey dwelling occupying a large plot on the south side of Littlehampton Road, opposite its junction with Roedean Road. The dwelling has a hipped roof to its main roof and there is a two storey flat roofed addition to the side and rear. There is a garage attached to the west side, served by a driveway and vehicular access towards the western side of the frontage.

Tree Preservation Order No.26 of 2002 applies to the site and relates to a group of trees in the front garden (G1) and two Silver Birch trees in the rear garden adjacent to the western site boundary (G2).

A group of 3 large Monterey Cypress trees (G3) at the southernmost end of the garden, 2no within the application site and 1no within the rear garden of No.115 were initially included in the TPO but omitted when it was subsequently confirmed in 2003. The 2no Monterey Cypress trees within the garden of No.117 have recently been removed. That growing in the garden of No.115 remains in situ, close to the eastern site boundary of the application site.

Adjoining to the rear (south) of the site there is a garage block and access road serving dwellings in Rusper Road.

To the east, No 115 is a detached two storey dwelling occupying a similar-sized plot as No.117. It has been extended to its side, which appears to be in use as an annex. There is a summer house located in the centre towards the rear of the garden.

To the west No.119 is one of a pair of semi-detached two storey houses occupying a substantially narrower and shallower plot than No.117. The rear gardens of houses in Ringmer Road adjoin the rear part of the western site boundary of No.117.

Permission is sought for the construction of a detached outbuilding comprising a gym/games room within the rear southeast corner of the garden. The proposal is an amendment to the outbuilding previously approved under AWDM/0545/23.

The proposed outbuilding would have an L-shaped footprint 10.112 metres wide and a maximum 10.112 metres deep. It would have a flat roof 3 metres high and would be externally clad in timber slats. Two sets of large bi-fold door openings are proposed in the north elevation, facing towards the rear of the dwelling. The proposed plan shows the outbuilding would be built on a number of 500mm x 500mm concrete pad stones raising it 150mm of the ground.

The internal layout would consist of a gym plus separate games rooms (with a home 'bar' and WC).

The proposed building would be sited 1 metre from the eastern site boundary and 1.5 metres from the southern site boundary.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1728/19 - Proposed 2no. bedroom bungalow to rear of 117 Littlehampton Road, with 2no. parking and 2no. cycle spaces with access from Littlehampton Road. Refused 31st December 2019 on the grounds: -

1. *The proposed building would, by reason of its scale, form, and positioning, relate poorly to the character and layout of neighbouring dwellings and appear as a visually discordant form of development resulting in a loss of vegetation and protected trees that would be harmful to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. As such the proposed development would be contrary to policy 16 of the Worthing Core Strategy and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF. H*
2. *Having regard to the relationship with the existing building, and neighbouring dwelling at No.119, the proposed development would represent an unneighbourly and overbearing form of development, causing a loss of privacy, and causing noise and disturbance as a result of the intensification of the use of the site and its access. As such the proposal is considered to be contrary to saved policy H18 of the Worthing Local Plan, policy 16 of the Worthing Core Strategy and the NPPF.*

AWDM/0385/20 - Proposed 2no. bedroom bungalow to rear of 117 Littlehampton Road, with 2no. parking and 2no. cycle spaces with access from Littlehampton Road. (Resubmission of AWDM/1728/19)
Refused 11th May 2020 on the grounds: -

1. *The proposed building would, by reason of its scale, form, and positioning, relate poorly to the character and layout of neighbouring dwellings and appear as a visually discordant form of development resulting in a loss of vegetation and protected trees that would be*

harmful to the visual amenities of the site and surrounding area. As such the proposed development would be contrary to policy 16 of the Worthing Core Strategy, the Guide to Residential Development SPD Nov 2013, and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

2. *Having regard to the relationship with neighbouring dwellings, most notably at No's 117 and 119, the proposed building would represent an unneighbourly form of development, causing a loss of privacy, and noise and disturbance as a result of the intensification of the use of the site and its access. As such the proposal is considered to be contrary to saved policy H18 of the Worthing Local Plan, policy 16 of the Worthing Core Strategy and the NPPF.*

A subsequent appeal was dismissed.

AWDM/0545/23 Proposed single storey rear (South) extension with roof lights and proposed games room outbuilding in rear garden. Permitted 13.09.2023. [A single-storey rear extension has since been implemented, but differs from that approved under AWDM/0545/23.]

Consultations:

The Council's Senior Tree and Landscape Officer has been consulted and raises no objection subject to recommended conditions.

Representations: None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036: SP1, DM5, DM19
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' (WBC)

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area, including garden outbuildings. The key considerations are the effects on the visual and residential amenities of the locality.

Visual Amenity

The footprint of proposed outbuilding is some 25.5sqm larger than that approved under AWDM/0545/23 and some 76.8sqm in total. It is notable that the GIA will not be dissimilar to the minimum internal floor area of a small 3-bedroom dwelling as set out in the Government's Nationally Described Space Standards. However, the outbuilding is not to be used as primary living accommodation, but as a gym and games room which can be considered 'incidental' to the domestic use of the dwelling. The proposals include a WC, but not a shower room.

Owing to the large floor area (and inclusion of a WC) it is questionable whether the use of the proposed outbuilding could genuinely be considered 'incidental' to the host dwelling. However, regard is given in this matter to an appeal decision elsewhere in the Borough (APP/M3835/D/21/3269610) where in allowing an appeal for a large outbuilding the Inspector stated: -

"*7. Although substantial in size, the proposal would not appear overly dominant due to the large scale of the rear garden which can comfortably accommodate a development of this size whilst maintaining adequate garden space. The flat roof design and timber cladding material finishes would signal the subservient status of the outbuilding thus ensuring it appeared ancillary to the main dwelling.*

8. The proposed development's modest height and flat roof would minimise its visibility in the surrounding area. The outbuilding would extend only a short distance above the existing boundary treatments and would therefore be partially obscured when viewed from neighbouring gardens……

9. For these reasons, the proposed development would not result in undue harm to the character and appearance of the area…….

14. As the proposal was submitted as part of a householder application for development within the curtilage of a dwelling, the use of the building for any other purpose beyond this scope would not be permitted by a planning permission granted by this appeal decision. The size, inclusion of a WC and the distance from the main dwelling would not in themselves undermine the ancillary nature of the building."

The outbuilding would not be visible in views from Littlehampton Road and would not appear unduly cramped or over developed in the context of this unusually large garden. Nor, given its single-storey scale and flat-roofed form, would it appear dominant in relation to the neighbouring garage block in Rusper Road to the rear, which extends the full width of the rear garden.

Although it has been established that the large Monterey Cypress tree in the neighbouring garden is not subject to a TPO, the applicant has included details of proposed concrete pad foundations necessary to protect the tree roots from harm. The Council's Tree Officer has raised no objection, including to the provision of service utilities, providing trenches are hand dug and located as far as possible from the tree.

Residential Amenity

The main impact arising from the development would be to the occupiers of No. 115 to the east. No.119 and properties in Ringer Road to the west are relatively remote from the proposed outbuilding and screened from views of it by mature planting and trees growing alongside the western site boundary.

The outbuilding would be sited adjacent to the boundary with No.115 and would be relatively large with the full length visible to the neighbour from within the rear garden, seen above the existing boundary fence. However, its position towards the rear of the garden would limit its impact and would be set in from the boundary by 1 metre. It is not considered the overall ‘bulk’ of the proposed building would have a severe impact on the amenities of No.115, which itself benefits from a large garden.

A small window is shown in the east elevation serving the WC and this would need to be obscure-glazed and fixed shut above 1.7m from the internal floor of the outbuilding.

It can reasonably be anticipated that the use of the proposed outbuilding as a games room and gym would be the focus of additional activity in this part of the garden, but this can be controlled by condition to ensure its use remains incidental to the main dwelling in the interests of protecting the amenity of neighbouring dwellings.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Materials as stipulated
4. Foundations as stipulated with air gap retained. Trenches to be hand dug
5. Obscure glaze and fixed shut WC window (up to 1.7m)
6. No further windows in any elevation
7. Use of outbuilding for purposes incidental to the use of 117 Littlehampton Road

Informative

Pro-active No Amendment

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

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 21.08.2025

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 21/08/2025