



THE WORTHING SOCIETY

President: Anthony Malone

Reply to: Susan Belton

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FAO Ms Rebekah Hincke
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Department
Adur & Worthing Councils
Town Hall
Chapel Road
Worthing BN11 1HA

6 January 2026
SB/SCM

Email: rebekah.hincke@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Dear Ms Hincke

WORTHING SOCIETY CONSULTATION RESPONSE

AWDM/1386/25 | 40 - 42 SOUTH STREET WORTHING WEST SUSSEX

Redevelopment including change of use, alterations and extensions to accommodate commercial floor space (Use Class E) at ground floor, and 9no. residential flats across ground, first, second and third floors including retrospective consent for demolition of part of the existing building and existing rear storage building.

Thank you for requesting the comments of the Worthing Society in respect of the above Planning Application. The development site faces both west into South Street with the east elevation located in Marine Place and is located within the South Street Conservation Area. In addition, Nos. 40 – 42 South Street are included on the Council's Local Interest List which records heritage buildings of architectural and historical importance. Both South Street and Marine Place are situated within the earliest part of the town centre dating from circa 1803.

I have now had the opportunity to discuss this application and we have the following serious observations which I have also copied to the Head of the Planning Department.

Before this planning application is considered further, the Worthing Society wish to draw to the Council's attention certain acts that have been undertaken at the site which we strongly believe to be both unlawful and illegal. The site is within the South Street Conservation area and, in this regard, we draw the Council's attention to Section 196D of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 concerning demolition in a Conservation Area and also to our earlier communications with you and with West Sussex County Council about the blocking up of Nelson Passage, which runs along the southern boundary of the site. The following points are relevant:

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- 1) A building at the rear of Nos. 40-42 has been demolished, with only the north gable wall remaining. This gable wall is of flint and brick construction and we believe it to be of early nineteenth century date and to comprise part of a stable or barn erected by Edward Ogle as part of a mews serving Bedford Row. It is therefore important to the history of the area, as part of the early development of Worthing. We calculate that the building would have been in excess of 115 cubic metres in volume and that, accordingly, planning permission should have been sought for its demolition. No application was made and a criminal offence has therefore been committed.
- 2) A criminal offence under Section 196D has also been committed by the removal of the wall on the north side of Nelson Passage, which is a public highway. This wall was considerably more than 1 metre in height, as can be seen from the attached photographs.
- 3) The continued blocking up of Nelson Passage is unlawful and has been reported repeatedly to the Highway Authority (WSCC). Councillor Turley is also trying to resolve this issue. WSCC are, apparently, reluctant to prosecute and say that they wish to resolve the matter by negotiation. The applicants, Geneva Developments, have used, as an excuse, that lighting has to be installed, but the closure has continued for several years now and nothing has happened. It is worth noting that there was street lighting in the Passage before it was closed and this will be evident from the photographs. There should therefore be no need to re-install lighting.

I have attached a photographic page of 'Nelson's Passage' to illustrate its original character as part of the grid layout of Worthing's historic Twittens. In addition, I have also attached current photographs of the site showing the removal of the northern section of the boundary wall which enclosed Nelson's Passage. There are also images of the doors boarding over the entrances in Marine Place and South Street. The photographs also illustrate the very poor condition of the upper storeys of 40 – 42 South Street, both locally listed, which have, apparently, been allowed to deteriorate over the last three years.

The Worthing Society therefore objects to planning application AWDM/1386/25 in its current form. We wish to see some attempt made to incorporate what remains of the barn/stable building, so that it can be properly appreciated in the context of the surrounding area and the re-opening and proper enclosure by boundary walls of Nelson Passage so that its character, as one of the conservation area's historic twittens, is retained. We see no reason why the re-opening of the Passage should not take place irrespective of any decision on the planning application and we hope that any decision can be deferred, pending a suitable revised scheme. The possibility of criminal proceedings being brought by Worthing Borough Council and by WSCC should enable a satisfactory solution to be found.

We look forward to receiving your comments at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Susan Belton
Worthing Society Chair

Cc: John Head, BSc(Econ), DipTP, MRTPI (Retd) - Worthing Society Heritage Team Lead
Cc: Mr Gary Peck, Head of Planning, Worthing Borough Council (for information)
Cc: Planning Dept., Worthing Borough Council (REDACTED)

Photographs as existing



Entrance to Nelson's Passage from Marine Place



Entrance to Nelson's Passage from South Street



View of demolition of boundary to Nelson's Passage



Image of remaining gable end of barn/stable

Attached: Historic photographs of Nelson's Passage.