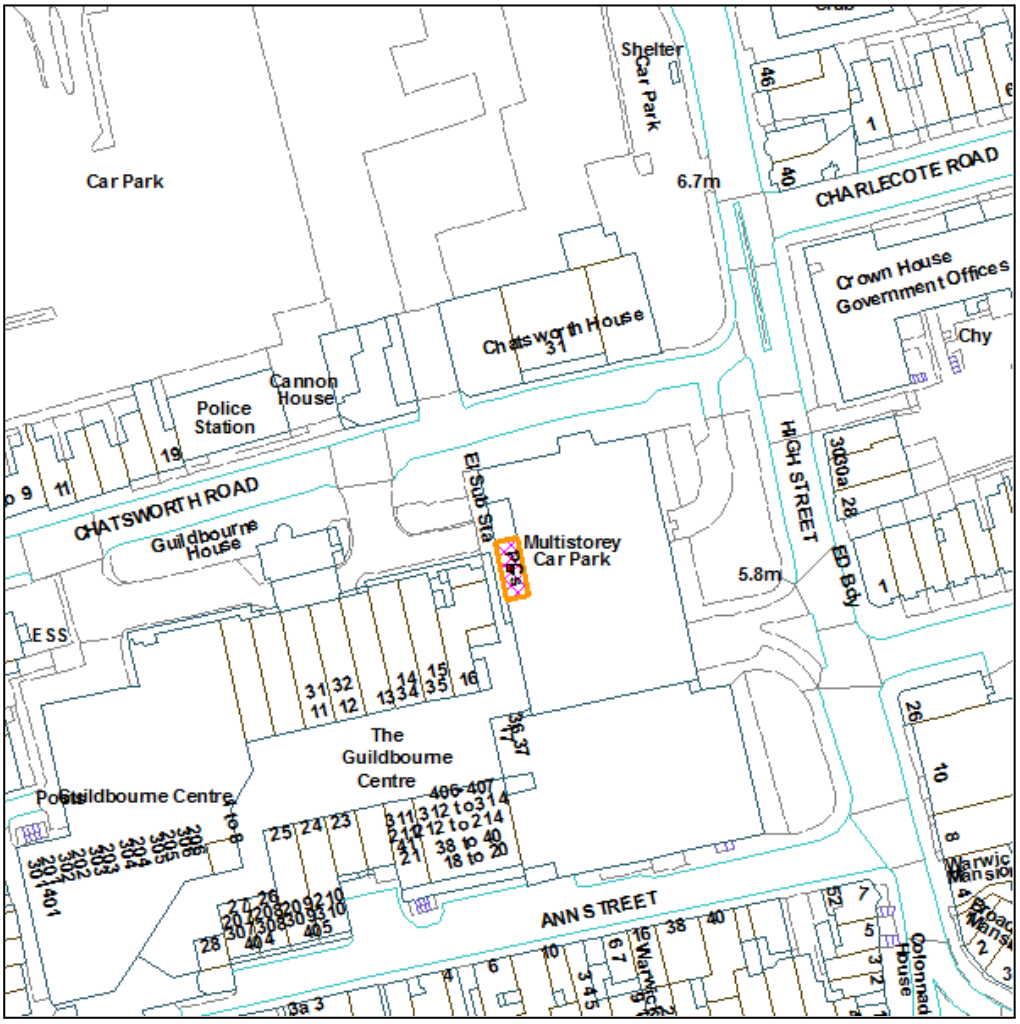
Application Number:	**AWDM/0855/23**	**Recommendation - APPROVE**
Site:	**Public Conveniences Block, Multi Storey Car Park, High Street, Worthing**	
Proposal:	**Reconfiguration and refurbishment of existing public conveniences located in the High Street multi storey car park to provide new public conveniences and changing places including introduction of 7 no. new doors into west wall.**	
Applicant:	Adur and Worthing Councils	Ward: Central
Agent:	Mr Tavis Russell	
Case Officer:	M. O'Keeffe	



Not to Scale

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Proposal, Site and Surroundings

This application relates to the existing Public toilets on the ground floor of the High Street Car Park outside the Guildbourne Centre on its north side and also accessed from Chatsworth Road down the pathway leading to the Guildbourne Centre.

Permission is sought to reconfigure the facilities to create 6 Unisex WC cubicles, separate urinals, a fully accessible unisex WC, a unisex parent and baby cubicle and also a changing places cubicle. Worthing Borough Council has been successful in being awarded a central government grant to put towards a new Changing Places facility.

Each of the 9 unisex cubicles will be accessible from the pathway with the introduction of new inward opening doors. The existing male bathroom will remain a shared space with additional urinals but no cubicles and will retain the existing door and lobby area from the pathway. The 5 existing women only cubicles accessed from a women only shared space including baby change area are to be lost.

Relevant Planning History

None relevant to the determination of the application

Consultations

Environmental Health: Any comments will be reported verbally at the meeting.

Sussex Police:

'Thank you for your correspondence of the 20th June 2023, advising me of a planning application for the reconfiguration and refurbishment of existing public conveniences located in the High Street multi storey car park to provide new public conveniences and changing places including introduction of 7 new doors into west wall at the above location, for which you seek advice from a crime prevention viewpoint.

The National Planning Policy Framework demonstrates the government's aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion - for example through the use of attractive well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

The level of crime and anti-social behaviour in Worthing district is above average when compared with the rest of Sussex, so additional measures to mitigate against any identified local crime trends and site specific requirements should always be considered.

I have had the opportunity to examine the detail within the application and in an attempt to reduce the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime loffer the following comments.

Consideration should be given to the siting of external CCTV to guard against any potential incidents of criminal behaviour or anti social behaviour.

The following documents will be of assistance to the applicant.

CCTV guidance for police requirements: HO (publishing.service.co.uk)

CCTV at Commercial Business
http://www.gov.uk/can-i-use-cctv-at-my-commercial-premises

CCTV I Search I Information Commissioner' Office (ico.org.uk)

The application of anti-grafitti coatings to the lavatory doors will ensure swift removal of any tagging incidents should they occur.

Lighting is an effective security measure and a useful tool for public reassurance in that it enables people to see at night that they are safe or, to assess a developing threat and if necessary, to identify a route they could take to avoid potential issues. Recent events that have made national news have become the focus of concern over safety in public places means that there is merit in recognising the enormous value people place on being able to move sound in public places at night under high quality lighting systems. Where lighting is implemented, it should conform to the recommendations within BS5489-1:2020.

Finally, construction sites often suffer from thefts, criminal damage, arson and anti social behaviour, all of which can have a major impact on completion dates and overall completion costs.

The SBD Construction Site Security Guide 2021 is designed to be risk commensurate and provides advice on how to secure the site from the moment the hoarding goes up until the moment the development is handed over to the lenient or end user. The advice is based on proven crime prevention principles that are known to reduce criminal opportunity by creating safer, more secure, and sustainable environments. It applies to all construction sites regardless of their size and is intended for all staff including security personnel. It can be found on the SBD website www.securebydesign.com

It is also recommended that contact is sought by the developer with local Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT) to establish good relations whilst the development is in the construction phase.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 heightens the importance of taking crime prevention into account when planning decisions are made.Section 17 of the Act places a clear duty on both police and local authorities to exercise their various functions with due regard to the likely effect on the prevention of crime and disorder. You are asked to accord due weight to the advice offered in this letter which would demonstrate your authority's commitment to work in partnership and comply with the spirit of the Crime and Disorder Act.'

Representations

3 objections have been received on the following grounds:

1. There should be private women's facilities that exclude men, men's facilities and a disabled/changing facility. Women are losing out in this new configuration. This is unsafe and makes them unsuitable for women.

2. Allowing men to have their own facilities and not women is discrimination. Under the Equality Act 'sex' is a protected characteristic and we need female only spaces to reflect our need for privacy away from men There have been many reports and articles in the news of sexual harassment in unisex spaces particularly of young girls!

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Worthing Local Plan 2023 - 2036, SP1, SP3, SS!, SS3, DM5, DM6, DM8, DM12 and DM13.

Relevant Legislation

The Committee should consider the planning application in accordance with:

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides that the application may be granted either unconditionally or subject to relevant conditions, or refused. Regard shall be given to relevant development plan policies, any relevant local finance considerations, and other material considerations.

Section 38(6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the decision to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

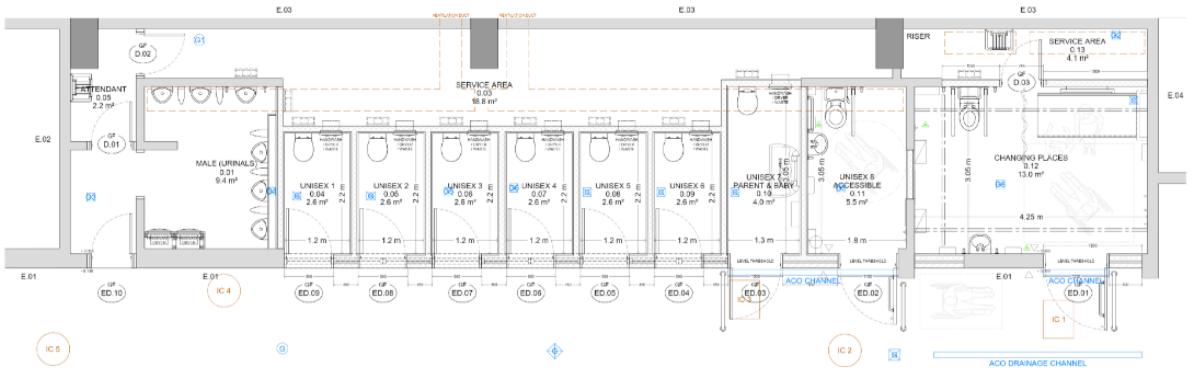
Planning Assessment

Principle

The principle of enhancing community facilities within the built up area boundary is acceptable. In this case issues of inclusivity, safety and good design, in particular relative to crime prevention matters, should be considered,

Visually the introduction of additional doors in the wall overlooking the passageway into the Guildbourne Centre will have little material impact upon the character of the area and nor it is considered there will be any impact upon the amenities of the nearest neighbouring residential properties.

The comments made by the objectors have been discussed with the applicant who has confirmed that while there are separate male urinals the others labelled as unisex in the plan below are enclosed with toilet and wash basin and therefore there are no male and females sharing washing areas.



Although the unisex toilets could be labelled specifically to male and female, given that the individual toilets all have their own separate facilities, it is not considered that in planning terms a condition could be justified requiring the units to be labelled in such a way.

In conclusion, it is considered that the refurbishment of the toilets will represent a considerable improvement upon the existing situation and accordingly it is recommended that permission be granted.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Development to be undertaken in accordance with approved plans
2. Full Permission

26 July 2023

Local Government Act 1972
Background Papers:

As referred to in individual application reports

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