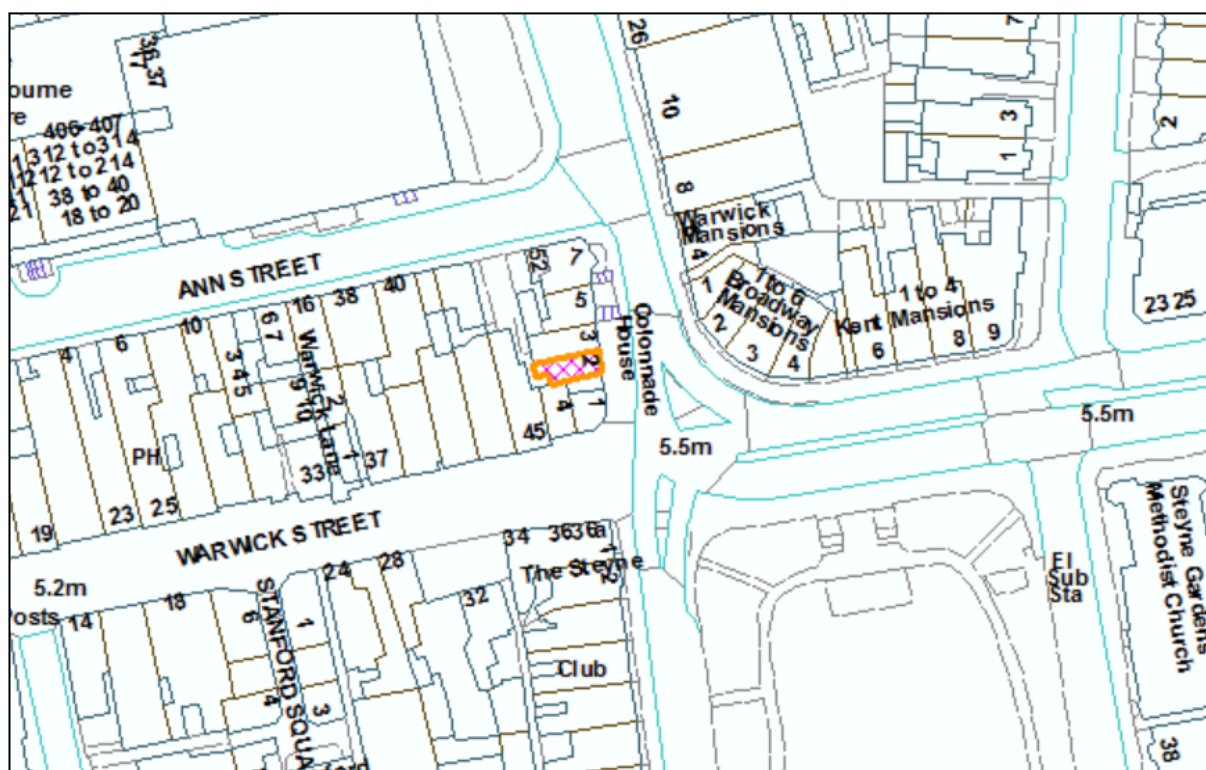


Application Number:	AWDM/0097/26	Recommendation - APPROVE
Site:	Shop 2 Colonnade House 1 - 3 High Street Worthing	
Proposal:	Change of use from restaurant (Use Class E) to a community workshop and meeting space (Use Class F2(b))	
Applicant:	Adur & Worthing Trust Ltd	Ward: Central
Case Officer:	Jacqueline Fox	



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Site and Surroundings

Colonnade House is a part 4-storey and part 2-storey, rendered curved-corner building located within the South Street Conservation Area and positioned on a prominent corner of Warwick Street and High Street, facing onto The Steyne and Brighton Road (The Broadway).

The former restaurant/takeaway (shop 2) faces High Street and is currently vacant and its appearance is slightly tired. The first floor and above appear to be flats or offices with the entrance to the south of the application site. To the north is a dress

shop. Colonnade House Gallery and studios are situated on the corner of Warwick Street and High Street.

The neighbouring property to the east, 45 Warwick Street, is a listed building, as are the opposite properties of the site, 34 and 36 Warwick Street.

The ground floor Shop 2 comprises an open area to the front with a kitchen area behind. There is a wash room and wc to the rear of the unit.

The site is within the secondary shopping frontage of Worthing town centre

The property is within the South Street Conservation Area and Colonnade House is a building of special interest.

Proposal

The application proposes the change of use of a former restaurant/takeaway to community workspace and meeting place. There are no internal changes proposed as part of this application with the old kitchen area being boarded up.

The application is brought to Committee for determination as it is a Council-owned site and the use would be operated by the Adur and Worthing Trust (AWT), whose statement below, describes the intended operation.

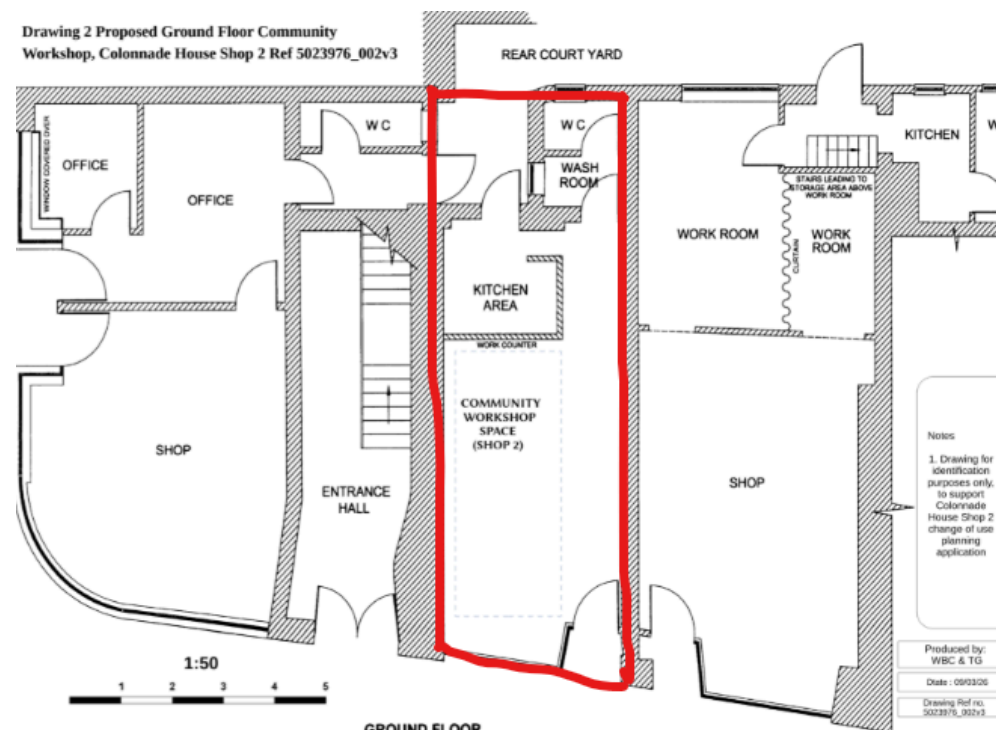


Figure 1: Proposed Ground Floor

Applicant's statement

Project Overview

The AWT Community Workshop project is a proposed extension of the Colonnade House Creative Hub. This project will establish a dedicated, street-level workshop space specifically designed for youth arts and local community use. Funding has been secured via a grant to facilitate essential repairs, fixture upgrades, and sustainable improvements for a 2026 summer launch.

Addressing Local Need

Current demand for creative space in the area is critical. Colonnade House currently faces waiting lists exceeding one year for accessible, public-facing facilities. This proposal directly responds to:

- **Proven Demand:** Public consultations in early 2025 and successful pilot workshops in Summer 2025 (in partnership with Sussex Bay and The Steyning Arts Society) confirmed a high demand for dedicated arts education space.
- **Filling the Gap:** As arts access diminishes in schools and public spaces, this will be the only dedicated facility of its kind in the local area.
- **Community Benefit & Inclusion** The workshop will provide a diverse, inclusive programme with a primary focus on youth provision.

Key offerings will include:

- Affordable, high-quality arts education led by local professionals.
- After-school, half-term, and summer holiday arts programming.
- Dedicated resources for local community groups and creative enterprises.

Strategic Resilience

In response to reduced public partnership funding in 2024, this project represents a proactive shift toward sustainable, community-led growth. By expanding the existing Colonnade House model, AWT will ensure the long-term viability of cultural services in Worthing while meeting a vital social and educational need.

The applicant has indicated that they estimate/anticipate the opening times to be 9-5 with some later workshops (although this unlikely to go beyond 9pm)

They expect the space would hold 12-15 max people depending on the specific purpose.

Relevant Planning History

AWDM/0141/21- Full planning permission for the demolition of 2-7 High Street and 52 Ann Street and creation of a mixed use development comprising 6 no residential flats with roof terrace (C3 Use Class) and a new Digital and Creative Hub consisting of office and meeting room space (Use Class E), reception areas, art studios,

exhibition space (Use Class E), café facilities (Use Class E) and associated cycle parking and waste storage facilities at the site of Colonnade House. Withdrawn

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: No objection from a transport/highways aspect.

This application is for the change of use from restaurant (Use Class E) to a community workshop and meeting space (Use Class F2(b)). The site is located on High Street, an A-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph. Following an inspection of the application documents, WSCC in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA) raises no highway safety concerns for this application.

There is no vehicular access associated with this site. The proposed Class F2 usage is primarily for daytime hours and will likely generate fewer material movements than the Class E restaurant use. Therefore, the LHA does not anticipate that material movements associated with the site will exceed that of the existing.

No off-street vehicular parking provision is proposed – therefore, vehicular parking would have to be accommodated on-street or within nearby paid-for provision, as per the existing arrangement. Comprehensive parking restrictions are in place on nearby roads, prohibiting parking in places that would be detriment to highway safety. The LHA does not anticipate that the existing nil car parking provision would result in a highway safety concern.

However, the LPA may wish to consider the potential impacts on on-street parking from an amenity point of view. Weight is given to the fact that the site is situated in a sustainable town centre location within walking/cycle distance of local services, amenities, and public transport links.

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.

Adur & Worthing Councils: Environmental Health officer:

No objections

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Worthing Local Plan 2020-2036:

SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development);

DM5 Quality of the Built Environment;
DM8 Planning for sustainable communities / community facilities;
DM12 The Visitor Economy
DM13 Retail and Town Centre Uses

Relevant Legislation

The Committee should consider the planning application in accordance with:

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

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; and

Section 73A and also Section 72 Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which require the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area.

Planning Assessment

Principle

Policy DM13 of the Local Plan indicates that amongst other things that changes of use within town centres will be carefully controlled to ensure that they support, rather than detract from, the successful functioning of the centres and their ability to meet local needs including making a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the centre; not unacceptably impact on daytime footfall; positively restore and/or enhance the character and appearance of the frontage; maintain the continuity of active frontages and ensure that any proposal will cause no significant adverse effects for the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Policy DM8 indicates that the Council will support improvements to health, education, social, community and cultural facilities to ensure they meet the needs of local communities where it is demonstrated that there would be no unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties and the provision of multi-purpose facilities and the sharing or extended use of facilities that can be accessed by the wider community will be encouraged. Policy DM12 also supports the provision of tourism facilities, in particular those that would help to extend the tourist season; improves the quality of the visitor economy; meet the needs of visitors and the local community and are acceptable in environmental and amenity terms.

Heritage policies DM23 & DM24 and national planning policy in NPPF (paras 207 - 216) describe the importance of safeguarding heritage assets including the character

of the conservation area. This character and appearance should be protected or enhanced by new development.

Under Policy DM13 the site is located within the Primary Shopping Area where retail uses are concentrated and separated into Primary Shopping and Secondary Shopping Frontages. The site is identified as being Secondary Shopping Frontage for which Policy DM13 states:

Worthing Town Centre

Spatial Policy SS3 (Town Centre) sets out the overarching principles for the Town Centre and associated seafront and it is the starting point against which all proposed development in these areas will be assessed.

ii) Secondary Shopping Frontage (SSF) - a wider range of uses will be supported provided they are active uses with active shop fronts will enhance the vitality and viability and complement existing uses. However, uses such as takeaways and uses with closed and inactive street frontages will be resisted; and

The site is within the Warwick Street/ Brighton Road Character Area, described as:

Warwick Street / Brighton Road: café cultural, food and beverage, specialist/niche/independent retailing. Located within the Primary Shopping Area.

The site was previously used as a restaurant/takeaway but is currently vacant. Community uses are appropriate town centre activities within accessible locations as part of the mix within secondary frontages. The proposed community use would bring back a building into use within the town centre within an area with a mixed range of commercial uses. The building retains its traditional shop front, and the use is considered to contribute to the vitality or viability of the town centre.

The unit has a retail unit on one side and Colonnade House Gallery and studios on the other side situated on the corner of Warwick Street and High Street. It would retain the existing shop front, which contributes to this town centre character. The proposal therefore would not impact on the character of the conservation area.

The principle of a community use in this location is therefore considered to be appropriate in accordance with policy.

Visual Amenity & Heritage

Colonnade House is similar in age (c. early C19) to adjoining and nearby properties in Warwick Street but was extensively re-modelled and re-faced in the late 1920s (as a result of a fire) creating its current individual style which differs notably from its immediate neighbours.

The proposed use would not involve any changes to the internal or external building and by maintaining the existing building which is currently unused, it is considered to preserve and enhance the conservation area.

Neighbour Amenity

The site is within a town centre location surrounded by commercial development. The applicant has indicated that the arts workshop would primarily be daytime uses 9am to 5pm with the occasional evening event. The hours of use can be controlled by condition. The maximum number of participants are likely to be in the region of 12-15 persons. In this commercial location facing onto High Street it is not considered that the use would have an impact on residential amenity and the size of the unit would limit the numbers.

Accessibility and Parking

The site is within an accessible location served by public transport with public car parks within walking distance. WSCC have not raised any objections to the proposed use which is also likely to be a less intensive use than is permitted use as a restaurant /takeaway.

Sustainability

The proposed use would facilitate the expansion of a current community facility providing services to local residents and visitors in a highly sustainable location, accessible by public transport

Conclusion

The proposed change of use is an acceptable town centre use which re-invigorates an empty unit without impact on the character of the building, the conservation area or neighbouring amenity.

Recommendation: APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Hours of use 8:30am to 9pm

Informative

1. Application is considered acceptable without amendments