



Planning Statement

Change of use to single dwelling

2 Hazelhurst Crescent, Worthing

Prepared by

WPS Planning

Planning Statement
2 Hazelhurst Crescent



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by WPS Planning in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the existing property at 2 Hazelhurst Crescent, Worthing, from two self-contained residential dwellings (Use Class C3) to a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3). Whilst the proposal does not alter the lawful use class of the building, planning permission is required for the amalgamation of the two existing units into one family dwelling.
- 1.2 The application seeks to restore the property to use as a single, cohesive family home through a programme of internal reconfiguration together with minor external alterations. The proposal makes effective use of the existing building, allowing it to function as a modern family dwelling whilst retaining its established residential character and making only limited changes to its external appearance. The submitted drawings illustrate that the works are predominantly internal, involving the removal of the subdivision between the two existing dwellings and the rearrangement of accommodation to create a spacious dwelling with well-balanced living accommodation and associated ancillary facilities.
- 1.3 The proposal represents a sustainable form of development that retains an existing residential building within residential use and responds to an increasing demand for larger family homes within the borough. Rather than intensifying development or introducing a new land use, the application seeks to rationalise the existing arrangement, improving the quality and functionality of the accommodation whilst ensuring that the property continues to contribute positively to the established residential character of the surrounding area.
- 1.4 This Planning Statement provides an assessment of the proposal against the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) together with the adopted Worthing Local Plan (2020–2036). It demonstrates that the proposed development represents sustainable development, preserves the character of the surrounding area, safeguards the amenities of neighbouring occupiers and provides a high-quality living environment for future residents.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal accords with the Development Plan when read as a whole and that planning permission should be granted.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site comprises a detached residential property situated on the eastern side of Hazelhurst Crescent within an established suburban residential area of Worthing. The property occupies a generous plot and is set back from the highway behind an existing front garden and driveway, with private amenity space to the side and rear. Access to the site is taken directly from Hazelhurst Crescent, where adequate off-street parking is available within the curtilage of the property.
- 2.2 The existing building has previously been subdivided to provide two independent self-contained dwellings. Whilst functioning as separate residential units, the building continues to read externally as a single detached dwelling, with no significant alterations having been undertaken that materially change its domestic appearance or its relationship with neighbouring properties. The proposal therefore seeks to reverse the previous subdivision by reinstating the property as one dwellinghouse through internal alterations, with only minimal external changes.
- 2.3 Hazelhurst Crescent is characterised by detached and semi-detached family homes of varying architectural styles, ages and designs, creating an attractive and established suburban streetscape. Properties generally occupy spacious plots with landscaped front gardens, private rear gardens and off-street parking, contributing to the open and low-density character of the area. The application property sits comfortably within this pattern of development and continues to reflect the scale, form and appearance of neighbouring dwellings.
- 2.4 The surrounding area is almost exclusively residential in character, with neighbouring properties being occupied as single family dwellings. The proposal

would therefore remain entirely consistent with the prevailing land use pattern and would reinforce the established residential function of the locality.

2.5 The site occupies a sustainable location within the built-up area boundary of Worthing and benefits from convenient access to a range of local services and facilities, including shops, schools, healthcare facilities, public open space and public transport. Frequent bus services operate within the surrounding road network, whilst the wider town centre and railway station are readily accessible. Consequently, future occupants would have access to a range of day-to-day services without an undue reliance on the private motor car, in accordance with the sustainability objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.6 The property is not located within a Conservation Area, nor is it identified as a Listed Building or subject to any known statutory landscape or heritage designation. Similarly, the proposal does not affect any designated ecological sites or other environmental constraints. The application therefore relates solely to the continued residential use of an existing dwelling within an established suburban setting, where the principle of residential occupation is long established and forms an integral part of the surrounding neighbourhood.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The site's planning history reflects its varied use over time. Permission was first granted in 1994 for the temporary use of the premises as a social centre for people with mental health problems, followed by permanent consent in 1996 for the continuation of that use. The property later transitioned to private commercial activity, most recently operating as a Skin and Wellness Retreat and Beauty Clinic providing health and beauty treatments.

3.2 The building has now been vacant for approximately eighteen months. Despite these successive changes, its internal layout, proportions, and design remain consistent with those of a residential dwelling. Returning the property to a family home represents both a logical and sympathetic use.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of the existing property from two self-contained residential dwellings to a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3). The proposal seeks to remove the internal subdivision of the building and restore its use as one cohesive family home. The application does not seek to intensify the use of the site or introduce a new land use; rather, it rationalises the existing residential accommodation to create a larger dwelling that better reflects the scale and character of the building.
- 4.2 The proposal comprises predominantly internal alterations to facilitate the amalgamation of the two existing units. These works include the removal of the internal division between the dwellings and the reconfiguration of the internal layout to provide interconnected living accommodation suitable for modern family occupation. The resulting dwelling would provide generous living space comprising a large open-plan kitchen, dining area and family room, a separate living room, utility/laundry facilities, multiple bedrooms, bathrooms and ancillary storage accommodation. The revised layout has been carefully designed to maximise the usability of the existing building whilst requiring only minimal structural intervention.
- 4.3 Externally, the proposal involves only limited alterations that are sympathetic to the existing building. The submitted elevations demonstrate that the overall scale, massing, roof form and architectural appearance of the property would remain largely unchanged. The development therefore preserves the established appearance of the dwelling and ensures that it continues to integrate successfully within the surrounding streetscene.
- 4.4 The proposal does not involve any extension to the existing building footprint and no additional residential units are proposed. Existing vehicular access arrangements are retained and the property will continue to benefit from off-street parking and private garden space appropriate for a family dwelling. Consequently, the proposal represents a modest and proportionate form of

development that utilises the existing building efficiently without increasing pressure on local infrastructure or the surrounding highway network.

- 4.5 The application has been designed with regard to the existing characteristics of the site and the surrounding residential environment. By reinstating the building as a single dwellinghouse, the proposal delivers a high-quality family home whilst preserving the established character of the property and ensuring that the building continues to make a positive contribution to the residential streetscene.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that this should run through both plan-making and decision-taking. In terms of the determination of planning applications this should mean the approval of developments that accord with the development plan without delay, and that where the development plan is silent or relevant policies are out of date, that permission be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or policies of the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 Sustainable development is seen within the NPPF as having three roles, namely an economic, social and environmental role which should be a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.
- 5.3 The following sections within the NPPF are important factors in the assessment of the proposal:
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 - Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
 - Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
 - Section 11 – Making effective use of land
 - Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Local Plan

5.4 In terms of the local planning policy context for the Site, the adopted Development Plan for the Worthing Borough is composed of the following relevant documents:

- Worthing Local Plan (2020 – 2036) – Adopted March 2023 (WLP).
 - Policy DM1 – Housing Mix
 - Policy DM5 – Quality of Built Environment
 - Policy DM13 – Retail & Town Centre Use
 - Policy DM15 – Sustainable transport and active travel
 - Policy DM16 – Sustainable Design

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for the amalgamation of two existing self-contained dwellings into a single dwellinghouse. Whilst this results in a reduction in the number of residential units on the site, the proposal does not involve the loss of residential use and the property will remain within Use Class C3. The application therefore retains the site's established residential function whilst improving the quality and functionality of the accommodation provided.
- 6.2 The building was originally constructed and designed as a single detached dwelling and continues to exhibit all of the characteristics associated with a substantial family home. Externally, the property reads as one dwelling and sits comfortably within a streetscene characterised by detached family houses occupying generous plots. The subdivision of the building has not altered its external appearance, and there remains little visual indication that the property currently comprises two separate residential units. The proposal therefore seeks

to restore the building to a form of occupation that is entirely consistent with both its original design and the prevailing character of the surrounding area.

- 6.3 Although the proposal would reduce the number of residential units from two to one, planning policy seeks to provide a balanced housing stock rather than simply maximise housing numbers. The Worthing Local Plan recognises the importance of delivering a range of dwelling sizes capable of meeting differing housing needs across the borough. Larger family homes form an important component of this housing mix and are often in limited supply, particularly within established residential areas where opportunities to create new detached family accommodation are increasingly scarce.
- 6.4 The existing subdivision results in a layout that is less efficient than would ordinarily be expected for a building of this size. The proposal removes this artificial division and allows the property to function as one coherent dwelling, creating spacious and well-connected living accommodation that better reflects the scale of the building. Rather than accommodating two comparatively constrained households, the building would once again operate as the generous family home for which it was originally designed.
- 6.5 In planning terms, the proposal represents a positive and sustainable use of the existing building. It makes effective use of the existing housing stock whilst improving the quality of accommodation provided, without extending the building or increasing development within the site. The principle of development is therefore considered entirely acceptable and accords with Policies SS1, SS2 and DM1 of the Worthing Local Plan together with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and Character of the Area

- 6.6 Policy DM5 requires development to achieve a high standard of design whilst respecting local character and reinforcing local distinctiveness. Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework similarly places great importance on

achieving well-designed places that function effectively and respond positively to their context.

- 6.7 The proposal is almost entirely internal in nature. The submitted elevations demonstrate that the scale, proportions, roof form, materials and architectural detailing of the existing dwelling would remain substantially unchanged. The limited external alterations proposed are sympathetic to the existing building and preserve its domestic appearance.
- 6.8 Importantly, reinstating the property as a single dwelling actually strengthens the visual coherence of the site. The building was designed as one substantial detached residence and continues to appear as such within the streetscene. The proposal therefore aligns the internal use of the building with its external form, restoring the original relationship between the dwelling and its plot. This creates a more logical and legible form of development that is entirely in keeping with neighbouring properties, the majority of which are occupied as single family homes.
- 6.9 As no significant external alterations are proposed, there would be no adverse impact upon the character or appearance of Hazelhurst Crescent. The proposal fully complies with Policy DM5 and the design principles contained within the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

- 6.10 The proposal would have no detrimental impact upon the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. No extensions, roof alterations or additional openings are proposed that would result in overlooking, overshadowing or loss of privacy. The existing relationship between neighbouring properties would therefore remain unchanged.
- 6.11 Furthermore, occupation by a single household is likely to generate a lower overall level of activity than two independent dwellings. The number of vehicle movements, deliveries, visitors and day-to-day domestic activity associated with

the property would reasonably be expected to reduce, resulting in a quieter pattern of occupation that is more reflective of surrounding properties.

- 6.12 The proposal therefore has the potential to deliver a modest improvement in neighbouring residential amenity when compared with the existing lawful arrangement. Accordingly, the development complies with Policy DM5 of the Worthing Local Plan.

Quality of Accommodation

- 6.13 One of the principal benefits of the proposal is the significant improvement in the quality of accommodation that would be created. The existing subdivision requires the building to function as two independent dwellings, resulting in duplicated facilities, fragmented circulation routes and a layout that does not make efficient use of the generous internal floorspace.
- 6.14 The proposed plans rationalise the accommodation by removing unnecessary subdivision and creating a well-balanced family home with spacious reception rooms, a generous kitchen and dining area, utility space, multiple bedrooms and bathrooms, together with improved circulation throughout the property. The layout is logical, practical and considerably more reflective of how a building of this scale would ordinarily function as a family dwelling.
- 6.15 The proposal therefore delivers accommodation that is not only substantially larger than the minimum standards required by the Nationally Described Space Standard, but also provides a significantly better quality living environment. The relationship between living areas, bedrooms and ancillary accommodation has been carefully considered to create a home capable of meeting the needs of modern family life over the long term.
- 6.16 The property also benefits from generous private amenity space and existing off-street parking, both of which are retained. Taken together, these characteristics reinforce that the building is inherently better suited to occupation as one substantial family dwelling than as two separate residential units.

6.17 In this respect, the proposal is considered to represent a qualitative enhancement of the existing housing stock rather than merely a numerical reduction in dwelling numbers. It delivers a significantly improved standard of residential accommodation whilst preserving the character of the building and ensuring its continued long-term occupation.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the existing property from two self-contained residential dwellings to a single dwellinghouse. The proposal represents a modest and sympathetic form of development that retains the established residential use of the site whilst restoring the building to a form of occupation that is more consistent with its original design, scale and character.
- 7.2 The building was clearly conceived and constructed as a substantial detached family home and continues to present as such within the streetscene. The existing subdivision into two residential units has not altered its external appearance and results in a building that functions less efficiently than would ordinarily be expected for a property of this size. By removing the internal subdivision, the proposal enables the dwelling to operate as one cohesive family home, creating a significantly improved internal layout with generous living accommodation that better reflects the scale of the building and the expectations of modern family living.
- 7.3 Whilst the proposal would reduce the number of residential units on the site, it would not result in the loss of residential use and should not be viewed simply as a numerical reduction in housing stock. Instead, the development would make a positive contribution towards the Borough's housing mix by providing a high-quality detached family dwelling within an established residential neighbourhood. The Worthing Local Plan seeks to deliver a broad range of housing types and sizes to meet differing housing needs, and larger family homes remain an important component of a balanced and sustainable housing supply.
- 7.4 The proposal has been carefully designed to preserve the character and appearance of the existing building and the wider streetscene. External alterations are minimal and sympathetic, ensuring that the dwelling continues to integrate successfully within Hazelhurst Crescent. The development would

therefore have no adverse impact upon the visual amenity or established character of the surrounding area.

- 7.5 The proposal would also preserve the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. As no significant extensions or alterations affecting neighbouring relationships are proposed, there would be no unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy or overbearing development. Furthermore, occupation by a single household is likely to generate a lower level of activity, vehicle movements and general domestic comings and goings than two separate households, thereby maintaining, and potentially improving, the residential amenity currently experienced by neighbouring residents.
- 7.6 Future occupants would benefit from a high-quality living environment comprising spacious internal accommodation, generous private amenity space and adequate off-street parking. The proposal therefore not only exceeds the expectations for modern residential accommodation but also secures the long-term beneficial use of an existing residential property in a highly sustainable location.
- 7.7 Overall, the proposal represents a logical and appropriate use of the site that restores the building to its intended purpose as a single family dwelling. It makes efficient use of the existing building stock, improves the quality of accommodation provided, preserves the character of the surrounding area and safeguards neighbouring amenity. The development accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the relevant policies of the Worthing Local Plan, including Policies SS1, SS2, DM1, DM5, DM15 and DM16.
- 7.8 For the reasons set out within this Planning Statement, it is considered that the proposal constitutes sustainable development and that there are no material planning considerations that would warrant the refusal of planning permission. The proposal delivers clear qualitative benefits through the restoration of a substantial detached property to a single, well-designed family home that is better suited to the building's original form, the character of the surrounding area

and the long-term housing needs of the Borough. Accordingly, the application is respectfully recommended for approval.