

# Planning, Design & Access Statement

## Proposal

**Proposed change of use from Fire Brigade  
Training Centre (Class F1.a) to Children's  
Emergency Accommodation (Class C2/sui  
generis) with associated parking**

**Site: 57 Ardsheal Road,  
Worthing, BN14 7RN**

On behalf of  
West Sussex County Council  
October 2023



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Town Planning ► Development Consultancy



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**1 Introduction**

1.1 Henry Adams Planning has been instructed to prepare a full planning application for our client, West Sussex County Council. The scheme would comprise:

***Proposed change of use from Fire Brigade Training Centre (Class F1.a) to Childrens Emergency Accommodation (Class C2/sui generis) with associated parking***

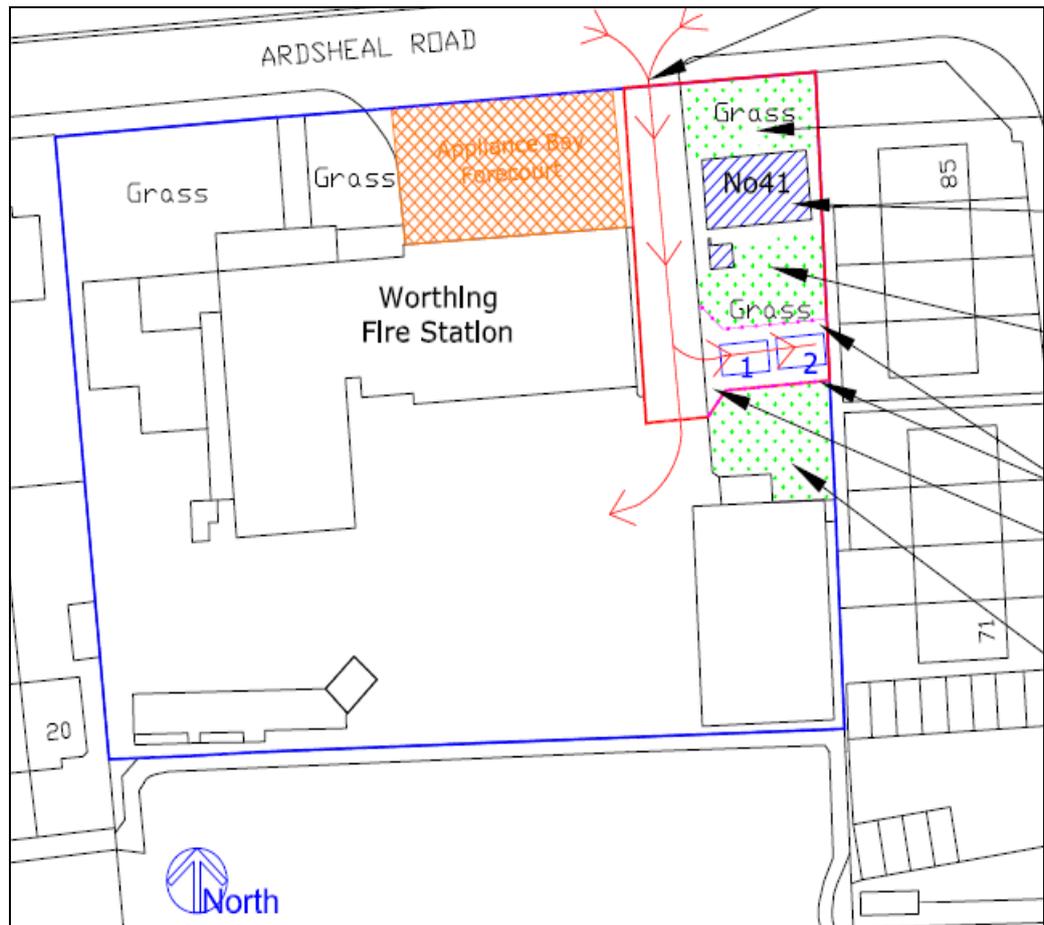
1.2 This Statement will seek to provide an assessment of the proposed development in relation to the principle planning matters to be considered in the context of national and local planning policy requirements.

1.3 In addition to this statement, this planning application is supported by the following documents:

| <b>Report</b>        | <b>Reference</b>  | <b>Consultant</b>          |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Drawings             | Location Plan<br>Block Plan<br>Existing Floor Plans<br>Existing Elevation Plans<br>Existing & Proposed Roof Plans<br>Proposed Floor Plans<br>Proposed Elevation Plans | West Sussex County Council |
| Supporting Statement | Childrens Home Site Management Plan   | West Sussex County Council |

## 2 Site Description

- 2.1 The site is located on the southern side of Ardsheal Road and within the Parish of Broadwater, Worthing. The application site forms part of the Worthing Fire Station site which is owned by the Applicant, West Sussex County Council. The site comprises a two storey, detached brick building which has areas of grassed garden land to the north and south of the building. The building was most recently used as a training facility for the West Sussex County Council Fire Service.



**Figure 1 - Map showing location of Application Site**

- 2.2 The site is situated opposite Broadwater Green and Cricket Grounds, to the north. The buildings which surround the site to the east, south incorporate a mixture of use classes. The Worthing Fire Station buildings are located immediately to the west with residential properties located on the roads beyond this to the west. To the east there are two groups of terrace properties on Rectory Gardens with a garage compound. Broadwater C of E Primary School is located further along Rectory Gardens and situated to the south of the site. Further distanced to the east, lie a number of commercial properties located at the eastern end of Ardsheal Road and Broadwater Street West.

### 3 Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal seeks full planning permission for the proposed change of use from Fire Brigade Training Centre (Class F1.a) to Childrens Emergency Accommodation (Class C2/sui generis) with associated parking.
- 3.2 The proposal does not include any physical changes to the existing building, either internally or externally in order to facilitate the change of use to the children's emergency accommodation. The building would provide three bedrooms with a maximum of two children and six adults staying in the accommodation at any one time. The adults staying in the accommodation will be overseeing the care of the children under WSCC children's services.
- 3.3 The vehicular access to the building would continue to be from the existing shared access to Worthing Fire Station from Ardsheal Road. To ensure that an appropriate level of parking is provided in conjunction with the proposed development, two tandem parking spaces are proposed to the south of the building and garden.

### 4 Background & Relevant Planning History

- 4.1 There does not appear to be any recent relevant planning permission relating to the building itself. However, the Council raised no objection to the Regulation 3 application in 2007 for a false pitched roof over an existing building to provide a training facility on the Fire Station site.

| Application Reference | Proposal   | Decision                   |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 07/0948/CCR3          | Application under Regulation 3 for a false pitched roof over existing building to provide training facility. | No Objection<br>21.09.2007 |

### 5 Planning Policy Background

- 5.1 Following paragraph 39 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, there is a duty to take decisions in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Statutory Development Plan comprises the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and Worthing Local Plan (2023).

### ***National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)***

- 5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Whilst representing guidance to Local Authorities it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It states, at paragraph 7, that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It defines three objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. It states that the objectives are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 5.4 Section 8 of the NPPF refers to the need for planning policies and decisions to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. Paragraph 93 states that to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Whilst reference is made to a potential list of community facilities, this is not considered to be an exhaustive list and includes community facilities relating to health and social wellbeing.
- 5.5 This application has been put forward on the basis that it would provide a community facility in the form of emergency accommodation for children under the care of West Sussex County Council. This would provide a health and care facility for children in need of emergency care and support.

### ***Worthing Local Plan***

- 5.6 The Worthing Local Plan (WLP) was adopted in March 2023.
- 5.7 The specific policies that would be relevant to the principle of this development have been reviewed and the critical policies that are contained are as follows:
- Policy SS1 – Spatial Strategy
  - Policy DM5 – Quality of the Built Environment
  - Policy DM8 – Planning for Sustainable Communities/Community Facilities
  - Policy DM16 – Sustainable Design
  - Policy DM22 – Pollution

- 5.8 Policy SS1 provides the spatial strategy for the Worthing Borough and sets out the four main aims of the WLP. The first is to deliver high quality development and provide for the needs of local communities and balance the impact of growth through the protection and enhancement of local services. The site is located within the Built Up Area Boundary of Worthing where policy SS1 states that development will be permitted subject to compliance with other policies of the WLP. Development should make efficient use of previously developed land but the density should be appropriate for its use and relate well to the character of the area.
- 5.9 Policy DM5 requires all new development, including those for changes of use, to be of a high design quality and respect the character of the site and surroundings. Developments should also in terms of their design take account of potential users of the site; create safe conditions for access, egress and active travel (walking and cycling). Developments should also not have an unacceptable impact on the occupiers of adjacent properties, particularly residential dwellings, in terms of loss of privacy, daylight, outlook or noise. The design of the development and impact of the proposed use on neighbouring amenity is discussed in the Planning Consideration section of this Statement.
- 5.10 Policy DM8 relates to the planning for sustainable communities and community facilities. This policy advises 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 impacts on the occupiers of adjacent properties. This policy states that the Council will work with service providers to assist in the delivery of facilities within appropriate locations to meet the needs generated by new development and existing communities. The proposal seeks to provide much needed emergency accommodation for children, as identified by West Sussex County Council, the Local Authority responsible for Childrens Services covering this area.
- 5.11 In relation to the loss of community facilities, policy DM8 states that development which would result in the loss of community facilities will normally be resisted and will only be permitted where accessible replacement facilities are provided or where it can be demonstrated that facility is no longer required through appropriate marketing. The loss of the existing training facility for the Fire Service will be considered in detail in the Planning Consideration section of this Statement.
- 5.12 Policy DM16 relates to sustainable design and requires all new development to mitigate the against the impacts of climate change. This includes measures towards zero carbon development, prevention of overheating and minimising waste.

- 5.13 Policy DM22 states that development should not contribute to, be put at risk from, or be adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water, artificial light or noise pollution or land instability. Where possible development should help to improve local environmental conditions.

## **6 Planning Considerations**

- 6.1 This section sets out the merits of the proposal and its compliance with national and local planning policy.

### ***Principle of Development***

- 6.2 The principle of the development is to be established on the basis that the proposal is within the Built Up Area and involves the re-use of previously developed land which is in accordance with the Council's Spatial Strategy as set out in policy SS1 of the WLP.
- 6.3 The proposal would involve the re-use of the existing Fire Station Training Building for continued use by West Sussex County Council for emergency children's accommodation. There is an urgent need for this type of accommodation within the local area and therefore the proposal would provide for the needs of the local community through the enhancement of the County Council's childcare support services. The proposal therefore complies with one of the main aims of the WLP and policy SS1, to provide for the needs of local communities and balance the impact of growth through the protection and enhancement of local services.
- 6.4 The proposed use of the building for emergency for children would support improvements to health and social facilities within the area, which would meet a need for this type of accommodation within the local area as identified by the County Council. The building will be occupied by one to two children at any one time, with a staff ratio of 2:1 (staff to children). There will be two staff shifts a day (morning and afternoon/evening) and therefore there will be a maximum of four staff in the accommodation at anyone time, with some additional staff in the building during the staff shift change over. Given the nature of the accommodation and the maximum number of children and adults to occupy the accommodation, it is not considered that this would cause any harm to the amenities of neighbouring residential properties. The proposal therefore complies with policy DM8 of the WLP.
- 6.5 Within the wider Fire Station site to the west, there are other buildings which are available for training by the Fire Brigade. The building in the south-east corner of the Worthing Fire Station site is being retained for training by the Fire Service. In addition to this, the County Council have completed the building of a large Fire Training Centre in Central Sussex. This has amalgamated the training facilities for the Fire Service across three Fire Station sites, including Worthing. The proposed change of use of the building would not therefore cause any harmful loss of training facilities for the Fire

Service as there are adequate and appropriate training facilities on the wider Fire Station site to the west.

- 6.6 The principle of the proposed change of use of the building and associated parking to provide children's emergency accommodation is therefore considered to acceptable and complies with policies SS1 and DM8 of the WLP.

### ***Amenity***

- 6.7 The nearest residential properties are located to the east of the application site. These comprise two groups of four terrace properties, 71 – 83 Rectory Gardens (odds) and 85 Rectory Gardens. These properties have shallow rear gardens with existing variable separation distances of 3.5 to 4 metres between the application site and the properties at 79, 81, 83 and 85 Rectory Gardens.

- 6.8 The existing building has an established use as a Fire Station training facility and this therefore creates a certain level of activity, along with the adjacent Fire Station which is within close proximity to residential properties on both the eastern and western sides of the wider site. The existing building can be converted without any internal or external layout changes to provide a three bedroom unit for children's emergency accommodation. The building will be habited by a maximum of two children and six adults overseeing associated care of the children, at any one time. A Children's Home Management Plan prepared by West Sussex County Council supports this application and provides further detail on the how the facility will be suitably managed by the County Council.

- 6.9 Given the nature of the use proposed, the total number of occupants, and that the children's care will be overseen by West Sussex County Council, it is considered that the use of the site for children's accommodation will not cause any harmful loss of amenity to the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties. It is not anticipated that the proposal would create any increase in noise disturbance or loss of privacy to the residential properties located in Rectory Gardens to the east. The proposed change of use would therefore comply with policies DM5, DM8 or DM22 of the WLP.

### ***Highways, Access & Parking***

- 6.10 The proposal includes the provision of two parking spaces which would be created to the south of the existing building and rear garden. These would form two tandem parking spaces which would be accessed via the existing vehicular access to the Fire Station from Ardsheal Road. The Applicant has discussed this with the relevant Highways Department within West Sussex County Council, and it is understood that two parking spaces would provide adequate parking facilities in conjunction with the

proposed use and in relation to the County Council's Parking Standards for new developments.

6.11 The existing access from Ardsheal Road has the benefit of good visibility from both eastern and western aspects and would provide safe means of vehicular access to and from the site. It is therefore considered that the proposal would provide create safe conditions for access to the development and an appropriate level of on-site parking in accordance with policy DM5 of the WLP.

6.12 It is unlikely given the nature of the proposed use that occupiers will use sustainable methods of transport, however the area is well served by nearby bus stop providing access to local bus services.

### ***Sustainability & Climate Change***

6.13 The proposal would involve the sustainable re-use of an existing building, with no layout or construction works required to the building. The location of the building is also sustainably located close to amenities and services within Broadwater Street. The existing building is served by a water connection, heating system, electricity and mains drainage.

6.14 It is intended to improve the thermal efficiency of the building, through an upgrade of the insulation in the roof space. The proposed change of use would therefore provide a small contribution to mitigate against the impacts of climate change which is relative to the scale of development and would comply with policy DM16 of the WLP.

## **7 Conclusion**

7.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use from Fire Brigade Training Centre (Class F1.a) to Childrens Emergency Accommodation (Class C2/sui generis) with associated parking.

7.2 It has been established that the principle of development could be supported by the Worthing Local Plan policies as it would provide improvements to health and social facilities within the area which would meet a need within the local area for this type of accommodation as identified by the County Council. The proposed change of use would not cause any harmful loss of training facilities for the Fire Service as there are adequate and appropriate training facilities in the Worthing Fire Station site and in the Central Sussex Training Centre. The proposal would therefore comply with relevant policies SS1 and DM8 of the WLP.

7.3 It can be concluded that the proposal would not cause any harmful loss of amenity to the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties due to the nature of the use and

maximum number of occupiers within the accommodation. The scheme also incorporates safe access, appropriate vehicle parking in conjunction with the proposed use.

- 7.4 The proposal can be demonstrated to be in accordance with the relevant local and national policies, and as such it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.