



WORTHING BOROUGH
COUNCIL

**Invitation for
Round 1: High Level Expressions of Interest
Food & Beverage (F&B) / Leisure / Other
Development Opportunity (Leasehold)
West Buildings Shelter, Worthing**



West Buildings Shelter, Worthing Promenade, Worthing, West Sussex

1. Instructions to prospective investors

Worthing Borough Council is looking for proposals for Food & Beverage (F&B) / culture/ leisure-led / other activities that align with the council's vision of activating the seafront to increase the 'things to do' / 'places to go' opportunity for both residents and visitors.

We would welcome submissions for the future use of the West Buildings Shelter site.

The site is offered as a development lease arrangement.

1.1 The EOI process

The Expressions of Interest (EOI) process will be split into two rounds:

This first round is designed to gauge the depth of demand for uses. It is intended to be fairly light touch and will result in a short list of potential investors. If required we may run some interviews at this stage.

In round 2 - successful applicants will be invited to submit a more detailed proposal.

This will be subject to full evaluation.

Once a preferred bidder has been identified, a short exclusivity agreement will be granted.

This allows time for the bidder to undertake further work to refine any assumptions made and to complete pre-planning application discussions.

Once the offer has been confirmed as acceptable, an agreement for lease will be granted, conditional on planning consent.

Following planning approval, a building lease will be granted under which the successful bidder will complete the development.

Further information about the site and requirements of the scheme can be found in the body of this document.

1.2 Round 1 EOI information required

Within your EOI submission, please provide:

Company details

- Your company / organisation name and details / status.
- Incorporation evidence such as a Company / CIC Registration number
- Confirmation that your company / organisation is legally trading & able to enter into a contract with the Council
- A list of current Directors / Trustees and any other party who has interest in the organisation.

Site Proposal:

- Details of your proposal inc use and outline dimensions of any proposed structures (design, plans and diagrams not essential but welcomed).
- Details of your operating model (seasonal or year-round).

- Details of your relevant track record in delivering similar leisure or recreation uses.
- Detail of how your proposal complies with planning policy for this site
- Details of your ability to manage the site responsibly, including security, waste, and customer safety.
- An overview of your commitment to ongoing maintenance and operational safety.

Supporting information

- Evidence of financial capability (strong financial backing & business stability).
- Level of capital investment you would be looking to make.
- Length of lease agreement you would be looking for.
- Proposed time scale of works.
- Acknowledgement of your commitment to reflect the heritage aspect of the shelter and wider seafront in designs.

Please feel free to include any additional information which you feel supports your submission.

All high level round 1 expressions of interest must be received by **5pm on Sunday 20th Sept** and emailed to **Duncan Marsh, SHW Email: dmarsh@shw.co.uk** or Ben Collins - bcollins@shw.co.uk at SHW

1.3 Evaluation of Round 1 - Expressions of Interest

All submissions will be subject to an evaluation exercise and will need to meet the following criteria.

- Financial strength and investor experience
- Compliance with planning policy
- Deliverability and timeline
- Recognition of the sites heritage value, view lines, etc

Please feel free to include sketch drawings or any relevant marketing material.

Bidders may be required by the council to attend an interview and/or provide clarification in relation to any matter relating to the submitted proposals.

The council reserves the right not to select the preferred bidder or progress with any bidder.

For round 2 shortlisted applicants will be required to submit more detailed information on aspects of the scheme.

Once a final preferred bidder has been identified, a short exclusivity agreement will be granted. This allows time for the bidder to undertake further work to refine any assumptions made and to complete pre-planning application discussions.

Once the offer has been confirmed as acceptable, an agreement for lease will be granted, conditional on planning consent.

Following planning approval, a lease will be granted under which the successful bidder will complete the development.

1.4 Anticipated Timeline for West Buildings Shelter EOI Round 1 and Round 2 *

note - schedule maybe subject to changes as required

EOI launch	w/c 3rd August
Submission deadline	5pm Sunday 20th September
Review of submissions / shortlisting	w/c 21st September
Invitation for interviews (as required)	w/c 5th October
Round 1 submissions contacted	
& Shortlist of Round 2 submission invitations out	w/c 19th October
Deadline for round 2 submissions	5pm Sunday 29th November
WBC round 2 submission review	w/c 30th November
Round 2 interviews (as required)	w/c 14th December
Round 2 applicants contacted inc preferred investor	w/c 4th January
With final agreement subject to planning approval	

2. Background - Why invest in Worthing ?

Worthing is located 15km to the west of Brighton and has excellent road and rail transport links to both London and the south coast.

Set between the sea and South Downs National Park, the town has witnessed a renaissance in recent years and is now recognised as one of the most sought-after places to live and work on the south coast.

In recent years Worthing has been recognised with accolades including - being named as one of the **'UK's Best Places to move to in 2023'** - The Telegraph, one of **'the UK's most underrated coastal breaks'** by The Times, Time Out's **Best British Seaside Town 2023**, highlighting its *'transformation as a vibrant spot with food, arts and affordability near the South Downs'*, and being named **Best Place to live in Sussex 2025** by Muddy Stilettos.

A number of major regeneration schemes are in the pipeline for 2026/27 which will further transform the town centre and cement Worthing's position as one of the prime coastal locations to live, work and invest in Sussex. These include a major redevelopment scheme at Union Place.

To support the changing nature of the town, the council is looking to bring a series of Expressions of Interest (EOI) opportunities to market in 2026/27, through development leases, with the aim of broadening the offer for both residents and visitors, and specifically to increase activation along the coastal strip.

The first phase of investment opportunities focuses on the West Buildings Shelter site and another at Brooklands Park (EOI's out June 2026) with further opportunities anticipated to follow.

Working in association with Historic England and other key partners, the council is also looking to secure a long-term future and reactivation of The Lido.



3. Investment Opportunity - West Buildings Shelter - Expression of Interest

Worthing Borough Council is seeking expressions of interest from suitably experienced and financially robust operators for the occupation and enhancement of the **West Buildings Shelter**, a locally listed seafront structure positioned approximately 500m west of Worthing Pier.

The council's vision is to appoint a **developer /operator who can create a space with the potential to deliver a high-quality food and beverage, leisure, or compatible commercial use that activates the space and enhances the experience for both residents and visitors while respecting the site's heritage and environmental sensitivities.**

The council would welcome schemes which:

i) Repair and restore the existing structure with the option to extend the building to the current roof line

or

ii) Removal of the existing structure and erection of a new unit which sits within the current footprint inc roofline and is sensitive in design and scale to surrounds and where possible ensures the retention / reflects key architectural features and historic elements of the original structure.

Note: With both options there is an opportunity to include outdoor seating areas both east and west along the prom in line with the current building curtilage and to the south (via temporary decking) onto the beach.

3. Site Location and Description

The West Buildings Shelter is located to the west of Worthing Pier and the lido, occupying a prime position on the seafront with uninterrupted sea views. The site lies within easy reach of local hotels, residential developments, the town centre, theatres and visitor attractions, all contributing to strong footfall throughout the year.

Marine Parade runs directly to the north, connecting the site eastwards to Shoreham, Hove and Brighton, and westwards towards West Worthing and Goring. Although there is no on-site parking, ample public parking is available nearby.

Total site area (shelter + canopied area): approx. 186 sq m (2,000 sq ft)

Internal enclosed area: approx. 56 sq m (600 sq ft)

The site lies within the **Marine Parade & Hinterland Conservation Area** and is identified in the **Worthing Local Interest Study (2003)** as a Building of Local Interest:

- <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/Media,99420,smxx.pdf> – Marine Parade & Hinterland Conservation Area
- <https://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk/media/Media,99455,smxx.pdf> – Worthing Local Interest Study

4. Development Constraints, and Design Requirements

The site is subject to important environmental, heritage and infrastructure constraints. All proposals must comply with the following:

4.1 Spatial & Infrastructure Restrictions

- No development or extension north of the existing footprint due to a critical Southern Water mains sewer running beneath the promenade.
- A Southern Water Sewage Pipe runs through the north side of the site and requires a 5m no build zone from the centre of the pipe
- No permanent development south of the existing footprint owing to site location immediately adjacent the beach and sea defences, with flood, overtopping and erosion risks, and coastal processes.
- Temporary or fully removable structures may be considered to the south, (over part of the beach shingle) eastern and western sides, subject to necessary consents (E.g. decking and / or external seating).
- Maximum building height: two storeys, inclusive of any mezzanines or rooftop structures.

4.2 Heritage & Conservation

- The shelter is locally listed. All proposals must protect or enhance its historic character.
- Proposals must (preserve or enhance) the character of the conservation area, demonstrating high-quality materials, restrained signage and a cohesive design approach.
- The shelter forms part of the setting of listed buildings on Marine Parade.
- Any works conflicting with the building's heritage value will not be supported.

4.3 Design Quality

The Council expects:

- High architectural quality suitable for a prominent seafront landmark.
- Robust, weather and flood resilient design to withstand the environment and sea level rise.
- Accessibility and inclusive design
- A visually attractive scheme that enhances the overall public realm and preserves and enhances the character of the conservation area.

And would particularly welcome:

- A design which has a lightweight aspect both in visual and structural forms.
- The retention, reuse or reflection of original architectural features and details in any new design.
- A building in scale and design so as to retain views and sight lines to the sea from West Buildings.

4.4. Preferred Uses

The council is particularly keen to attract a high-quality food and beverage operator, offering:

- A strong year-round or high-season presence
- An appealing offer to both residents and visitors
- A design aesthetic aligned with the seafront environment
- High standards of service, cleanliness, and operational management

Alternative leisure or other uses may be considered where they complement the location, support footfall and respect the constraints of the site.

5. Planning Policies, Technical considerations and Open Space Protection

The successful operator will be required to secure:

- Planning permission, including any change of use
- A heritage impact assessment due to impact on conservation area and on the shelter itself as a locally listed heritage asset
- Relevant building control approvals
- Consultation with Southern Water due to sewer easement

Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek pre-application planning advice.

Initial enquiries may be sent to: planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk - (Detailed advice may incur a charge.)

For general reference applicants should refer to [Worthing Local Plan \(2023\)](#).

Applicants must satisfy themselves regarding:

- Ground conditions
- Flood / erosion risks
- Service connections and utilities (the site has one power socket currently with full service install cost estimated at approx £50k)
- Drainage and sewer proximity

Title to the land is held under WSX316345

6. Costs

The successful applicant will be responsible for:

- The council's reasonable legal costs including those related to planning applications and preliminary enquiries
- Costs arising from the grant of any new building agreement or ground lease
- Costs associated with any statutory public open space notice
- Costs for install of services
- Cost relating to sewage easement liaison & agreements
- Any required title indemnity insurance

7. Viewings

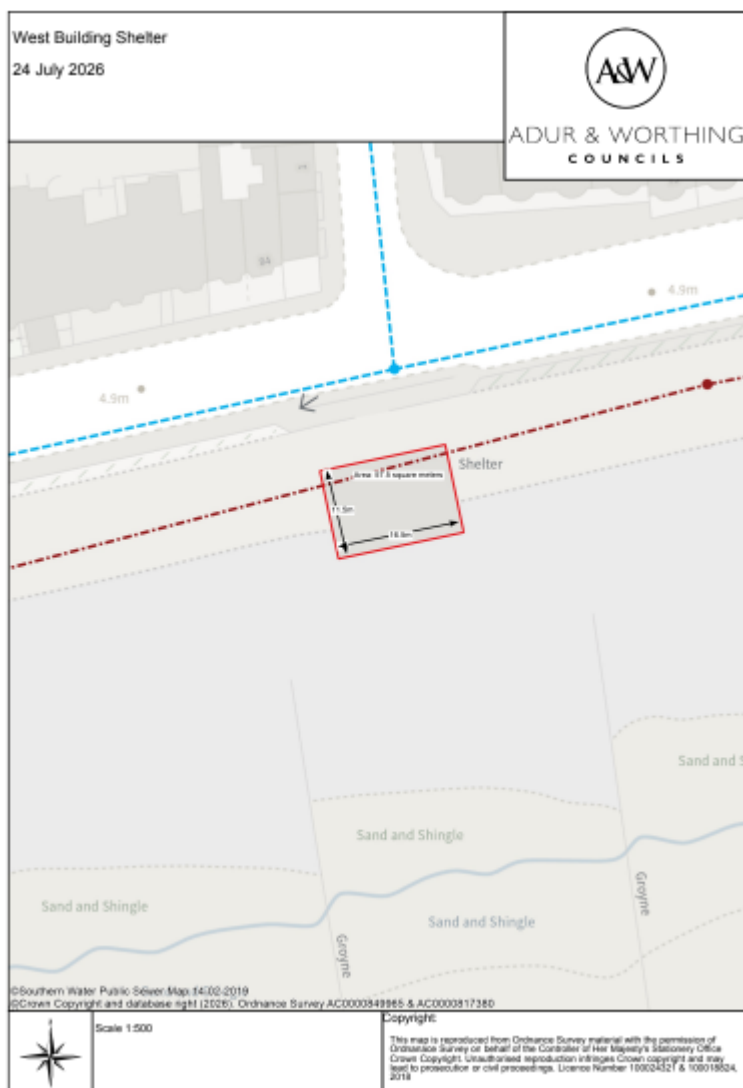
The shelter can be viewed externally at any time. Internal viewings can be arranged upon request.

If an accompanied viewing is required, this can be arranged by emailing

Duncan Marsh - dmarsh@shw.co.uk or Ben Collins - bcollins@shw.co.uk at SHW

Phone: 01903 229200

Detail of site and location of main foul sewer below



Data Room available on request from

Duncan Marsh - dmarsh@shw.co.uk or Ben Collins - bcollins@shw.co.uk at SHW

Please note: The contents of the data room are supplied without prejudice for reference purposes, and WBC advises those wishing to invest to carry out their own due diligence with regard to the site