Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1281/12 Recommendation – Approve

Site: **Atlantic Court, Ferry Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex**

Proposal: **Installation of replacement glazed screens and handrails to existing balconies on front (east) elevation of ground, first, second and third floor level flats**

Date of site visit: 21st December 2012

Neighbours checked: Y
Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

Atlantic Court, Ferry Road is a 5-storey block of 60 flats with garaging at the rear. It is situated on the west side of Ferry Road between Beach Road and Riverside, Shoreham. Along with Pacific Court to the north, Atlantic Court forms one of a pair of similar blocks, built in the 1960s and comprising a total of 110 flats. The surrounding area comprises predominantly two-storey dwellings.

Permission is sought to replace the existing mild steel painted screens and timber handrails to the balconies of 48 of the flats at ground, first, second and third floor levels on the east (front) elevation of Atlantic Court with 'satinised' (self-cleaning) toughened glass screens and Royal Chrome coated (self-cleaning) anodised aluminium handrails, support posts and fixings.

The existing balcony screens consist of six pairs of 2.7 m long by 1 metre high white painted metal railings with 0.7 m high buff-painted mild steel screens. Those to the ground floor flats (12 flats) are straight across railings and panels while those to the first, second and third floor balconies (36 flats) have both a front and a side of railings, with the side section 0.7 m in depth from the balcony edge.

The proposed balcony screens would consist of 6 pairs of combined screens and handrails with a central post. These would be 1.1 metres high above the balcony decks by 2.7 m long. Where there is a return section, this would be 0.7 m in depth. They would consist of 'satinised' toughened glass with Royal Chrome factory finish anodised aluminium handrails, support posts and brackets/fixings. These would replace the existing balcony railings and screens at each level from ground to third floors, which are heavily corroded with rust.

The top (fourth) floor of the building comprising a further 12 flats is not affected by the proposal.

The application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, as follows:

Design and Access Statement

1. **Introduction**

This Design and Access Statement uses the sequence advised in the CABE guide of 2006 and follows the development of the project as it progressed.

2. **Description**

The property is a block of 60 flats on Shoreham Beach area. Works are proposed to redecorate and repair the east/front elevation and the residents wish to include replacement of the existing balcony screens.

3. **DESIGN**

3.1 **Use:** The property is in use as sixty residential flats.

3.2 **Amount**

Of the sixty flats, 48 on the ground, first, second and third floors are proposed to have the new balcony screens. The ground floor screens have a single run across the face of the balconies. Those on the higher floors have a short return back to the elevation brickwork.

3.3 **Layout**

The proposed layout will replicate the existing in new and different materials, more suited to the location and requirements of the management committee (removing rust stains). Other than materials, the main noticeable change would be the removal of the existing painted steel angles hanging over the front of each balcony, used to connect the existing screens to the structure. Balcony surfaces would be made good and new fixings would be taken straight in to the concrete. A proprietary anodised aluminium channel runs along the base of the glass, but not around the balcony edge. Each screen would have an anodised aluminium central post.

3.4 **Scale:** All scales would remain approximately the same. However, the handrail would be raised slightly to achieve 1100 mm protection required by Building Regulations. The fourth floor arrangement would remain as existing.

3.5 **Landscaping:** Landscaping will not be affected.

3.6 **Appearance**

The intention is to improve the appearance of the property in two main ways. Firstly, the existing painted steel screens and channels have corroded such that they spread rust stains across the elevation, both on and adjacent to metalwork. In addition, the painted metal and timber screens are not aesthetically pleasing. The proposed 'Royal Chrome' finished anodised aluminium and glass combination is much more attractive. The glass is to be 'satinised' to improve uniformity and privacy, and self-cleaning. The proposed screens are a proprietary factory finished system used in various seafront locations, including the neighbouring roads.

3.7 **ACCESS:** Existing access arrangements will not be altered or affected.

Consultations

None

Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AH7 and Appendix 11 'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising:
Development Control Standard No.3 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings'
South East Plan (GOSE 2009): CC1, CC6, BE1
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Under the above policies, alterations and ancillary development to existing dwellings (including blocks of flats) will normally be permitted, so long as they would reflect, and would not materially harm, the predominant characteristics, design and appearance of the building/block concerned, in terms of form, scale, positioning, design and materials, and, further, so long as they would not impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties through overshadowing, an overbearing effect or loss of privacy to an unacceptable degree.

The existing front balconies to Atlantic Court are the original balconies to the 48 ground to third floor flats in the block.

It is evident from the applicant's Design and Access Statement, and confirmed on site, that the balcony screens and railings to these flats are in a very poor state of repair, which has been caused by corrosion of the metal work and structure by rust, due to the effects of weathering, having been exposed to the elements for about 50 years. The rust is severely staining the front of the balconies across the façade. This detracts from the appearance of the building. The applicants submit that the existing balconies are beyond economic repair and require urgent replacement, for safety and aesthetic reasons.

The proposed replacement balcony screens and handrails would be light in appearance, of self-cleaning 'satinised' toughened glass with self-cleaning Royal Chrome (silver) coated aluminium supporting posts, handrails and fixings. These would be less prominent in the street scene than the existing painted metal screens and railings, and in my opinion would be in harmony with the design of the building, with its predominant brick façade and white painted fenestration. The 'self-cleaning' properties of the materials would be particularly suitable in both design and construction terms, as they would give the balconies a long lasting, high quality finish. All rust staining to the existing balcony structures would be removed as part of a refurbishment of the building. The replacement screens would meet safety requirements and the residents' objectives for an aesthetically pleasing feature for the building, which would considerably enhance the appearance of the building whilst being sustainable for the future and reducing upkeep costs.

Further, the proposal would not adversely affect any other nearby property

In summary, the proposal is a welcome improvement to this 1960s block of flats, which accords with the above policies, providing a suitable and sustainable development in line with the National Planning Framework replacing the existing sub-standard/rusted balcony screens.

Subject to a condition requiring the development to be carried out fully in accordance with the plans and specification of design, construction, materials and finishes submitted the application is acceptable.

On this basis, conditional permission is recommended.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

The proposed development would not detract from the local environment and can take place without resulting in unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties. It would consequently not conflict with the saved policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AH7) or the policies of the South East Plan (CC1, CC6, BE1)

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. Permission relates to approved plans:
   Drawing No: 087/12/02
   Title: East Elevation and Balcony Details (Scales 1:100. 1:50 and 1:20):
   Atlantic Court, Ferry Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5YJ
   Date Received: 17th October 2012

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? No

Case Officer: HBM Date: 7th January 2013

Authorised by: PD Date: 7.1.13