Expiry Date - 29/11/2023

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0684/23 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Flat 3 Masefield Court Lansdowne Road Worthing

Proposal: Replace the existing living room window with a new window and door set and create a platform and ramp to provide wheelchair access.

Date of site visit: 21/06/2023

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: Y – Neighbours re-notified of the re-positioning of the access ramp. Expiry: 24/11/2023

Site and Surroundings

The proposal relates to flat 3 Masefield Court, a ground floor flat within a purpose-built block of flats located to the north side of Lansdowne Road. Masefield Court was constructed subsequent to permission WB/00/00690/FULL which was a wider scheme incorporating the adjacent larger L shaped block Jubilee Court that delivered a total of 73No. flats, implemented circa 2002. Masefield Court comprises a total of 12No. flats within its square shaped footprint spread across three-storeys. The block itself has a uniform appearance in respect to form, design, massing, proportion, and fenestration detail, of which have a white UPVC finish.

The application property is located to the north-east corner of the ground-floor. The windows to the east elevation outlook a grassed amenity space and a concrete footpath extending from the car park beyond that. The footpath leads to a patio area to the opposite side of the grass area where a rotary laundry dryer is situated. The plot comprises vegetation aplenty, particularly to the curtilage of the plot where various TPO's are situated, but also on the periphery of the block. A large undesignated tree which has a maximum crown height similar to the height of the block is located at close proximity to the south-easterly of the east facing windows of the application property

Proposal

Permission is sought to install an access ramp with platform and railings together with the replacement of part of the rearmost east facing window with a door.

The ramp would extend perpendicularly off the rearmost point of the existing footpath alongside the shared boundary with Jubilee Court to the north and

would dogleg south to connect to the opening to the east elevation of the flat, creating an L shape.

The existing opening comprises a 3-section casement window with the two outer sections being openable. The window measures 1575mm wide x 1200mm in length and 1350mm to sill from ground level. The door would be inserted into the existing opening to replace the centre and left sections of the window; the right section of the window would be retained. The opening would remain the same width (1575mm) and height to sill level of the window (1350mm), but would increase in length by virtue of the door to 1980mm.

The platform and ramp would be enclosed with face brick dwarf walls and finished with slip resistant concrete pavers. A continuous tubular steel hand rail would be fitted to all exposed edges. Hand rails would be at a height of 900mm with a secondary rail at mid-height. Rails would be powder coated in black. The door would be composite and part glazed in white and the window would remain white UPVC window.

Relevant Planning History:

Masefield Court was constructed pursuant to permission WB/00/00690/FULL, decision issued 29/04/2002.

Consultations:

Tree Officer:

The trunk diameter at breast height is less than 30cm so the works would be outside of the Root Protection Area and the latest plan can be approved.

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (Revised September 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG ‘Extending or Altering Your Home’ (WBC)

Worthing Local Plan (2023) 2020-2036
SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
DM1 (Housing Mix)
DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment)

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area. The key considerations are the effects on the visual and residential amenities of the locality.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

The replacement of the existing window with a door would result in the break in uniformity of the openings in the east elevation of the block. Whilst the door would be finished in a different material it would still sympathise with the existing alignment and proportions of the existing fenestration and would not result in material harm. A section of the grass area between the east elevation of the block and footpath, along with shrubberies to the north boundary and under the cill of the existing window, which are considered to positively contribute to the visual amenities of the area, would be lost to unsightly infrastructure. Notwithstanding, the layout of the ramp adopts a route which follows on from an existing footpath to the edge of the plot which would avoid bisecting the green space and would be less prominent. Moreover, significant weight must be applied to the nature of this application which seeks to adapt the property to meet the needs of a disabled person which would significantly improve the individual's standard of life. Following discussions with both the agent and Council's Tree Officer, it was agreed that the ramp be re-routed as originally submitted to ensure the nearby tree, which is considered to be a visual asset for the area, is not adversely affected. The Tree Officer confirmed their satisfaction with the revised route, which would be located some approximately 3570mm from the trunk of the tree.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposed works to facilitate disabled access would outweigh any resulting harm to visual amenity.

Residential Amenity

The ramp would pose an alteration when viewed from some neighbours' windows owing to the open nature of the amenity area. The revised route which would extend along the north of the plot would particularly affect the outlook to the ground-floor flat located to the south-east corner of Jubilee Court, however, this is not anticipated to give rise to a materially harmful effect in view of the practical purposes and the minor nature of the development. The works would not compromise other neighbours' abilities to access their respective properties.

There are no residential amenity grounds to resist the proposal.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard Time Limit
3. Materials

Informatives

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the

application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Jason Albon Date: 24.11.2023

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 27.11.2023