

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0131/26

Recommendation: – APPROVE

Site: Flat 4 Romney Court Winchelsea Gardens Worthing

Proposal: Proposed replacement of existing UPVC windows and door to rear elevation in UPVC

Date of Site Visit: 22/04/2026.

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings

The application site, Flat 4 Romney Court, is located within Winchelsea Gardens, in an established residential area in Worthing. The site is located to the west side of Winchelsea Gardens and within the Marine Gardens Conservation Area. The property comprises a three-storey block of flats and the application relates to Flat 4 located on the ground floor. The building is included on the Local Interest Study (2003) with the following description:

“This is one of four similar blocks of apartments arranged around Marine Gardens. Dating from the 1940's, or thereabouts. It has simple clean lines, with a strong horizontal design emphasised by the contrasting painted concrete bands. The walls are in brick and the building has a flat roof. Some of the glazing has been replaced over the years, which has resulted in a mixture of styles, which spoils the overall concept. The original lettering has been retained, adding to the building's character.”

The application site is not a listed building, has no listed buildings nearby, and there are no TPO trees present on or around the site.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the replacement of existing UPVC windows and a door to the rear elevation in UPVC.

There are to be three windows and one door replaced in total (panels 1-4 as illustrated on the drawings).

The replacement windows would match the style and openings of the existing windows but will contain slightly thinner frames when compared with the existing. The replacement windows and door would be white, double-glazed uPVC as per the existing.

Relevant Planning History:

- 03/00061/FULL - Installation of replacement windows with anodised (silver) ali.

STATUS: Conditional Consent 28th February 2003.

- Various consent for replacement windows in uPVC to other flats.

Consultations

No responses received.

Neighbour Representations

None received.

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM23, DM24
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' (WBC)
Marine Gardens Conservation Area Appraisal

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 and on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

The Marine Gardens Conservation Area was recently designated in 2024. The Appraisal refers to the site and surroundings, as follows:

Marine Gardens Conservation Area is historically interesting as an example of a planned municipal garden and public housing development, consciously eschewing the prevailing forms of development of Worthing in the late 19th century.

The three principal building blocks of Hastings, Romney and Winchelsea Courts adopt a modernist philosophy characterised by an emphasis on volume and minimal ornamentation, and also draw on the elegance of design found in ocean liners.

Beyond the gardens themselves, there are three main buildings within the conservation area: the residential apartment blocks of Romney Court, Hastings Court and Winchelsea Court. All three buildings are on Worthing's Local Interest List, and all contribute positively to the conservation area.

The three buildings are subtly different, but are consistent in their scale, massing and materials, and were all designed by the same (unknown) architect and built between 1931 and 1937. Hastings and Romney Courts are three storeys in height with flat roofs and are located at the east and west ends of Marine Gardens where the long low buildings form a gentle arc around the southern part of the curved road

(Winchelsea Gardens).

The architectural detailing of the buildings is high quality. The buildings are three storeys in height and the horizontal emphasis of wide continuous brick bands is relieved by a rhythm of projecting bays, which return to the recessed block with a series of pleasing curved balconies. Within each of the projecting bays further relief is provided by contrasting solid and void elements provided by stacked recessed balconies.

There have been alterations and losses to these three buildings which compromise their architectural integrity. Most obviously, all the original Crittal windows have been replaced with uPVC which drastically diminishes the striking 'Deco' appearance of the buildings, particularly where on curved parts of the buildings such as the stair towers.

In relation to management of the CA:

There is however great value in educating management companies and residents about the benefits of installing windows to traditional designs as and when renewal is required in the future. It is recommended that guidance is issued to homeowners about appropriately designed double glazed windows which would enhance the appearance of their properties. It is recognised that this may be a process of gradual improvement over time.

Residents and management companies are encouraged to explore options to install historically accurate replicas of the original steel framed windows at Hastings, Winchelsea and Romney Courts.

Firstly, it would be difficult to justify refusing uPVC windows in principle in this instance, given that the existing windows to be replaced are UPVC, and uPVC units predominate throughout the building.

The block of flats is prominent within the street scene; however, the windows and door that are the subject of this application are located to the rear of the building and are therefore not visible from the public realm. Most of the windows within the building have already been replaced with white uPVC units of a very similar design to those proposed as part of this application.

Whilst it is recognised that a more comprehensive approach involving the replacement of all windows within the block with more traditional designs would result in a significant enhancement to the building, it is difficult to persuade homeowners of the benefits on a case-by-case basis owing to the considerable difference in cost between UPVC and bespoke 'Crittall' windows. In the meantime, the proposed replacement uPVC windows and door which incorporate slightly slimmer frames than those existing will be no worse in visual terms. As such, the proposal will not result in any further material harm to the special interest of the building.

That said, the long-term management of the block as a whole should seek the gradual replacement of windows with designs more closely reflecting the original fenestration pattern and detailing.

Residential Amenity

There are no additional or enlarged openings resulting from this application. Other than for some minor inconvenience during the fitting of replacement windows, the proposal would not have any detrimental impact on the residential amenities of neighbours.

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to condition(s):-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard Time Limit

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission 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: Tom Westerman Date: 28/05/2026

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 29.05.2026