Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0152/24 Recommendation: APPROVE

Site: 18 Old Fort Road, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex

Proposal: To create external stairs on the east side of the property from ground level to current first floor balcony related alterations to current balcony and privacy screens.

Date of Site Visit: 19th March 2024 when considering pre app.

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application site is a new build, two storey, 4 bedroom dwelling which was permitted in 2013, AWDM/1610/13 and built in 2014. It is of contemporary design and complements the street scene and surrounding locality.

Consent was originally sought here to add external stairs to the eastern side of the building from the rear garden to the rear first floor terrace and at second floor leading to a roof terrace. Officers advised that the proximity of the unscreened staircase and its height up to roof level combined with roof terrace would be unneighbourly.

As a compromise, amended plans have been received to show a single staircase from the rear garden on the east side leading to the existing first floor rear balcony. The second floor staircase and the roof terrace have been removed from the application.

Representations: - 1 representation received in relation to the original proposals from the owner/occupiers of no. 20 Old Fort Road.

- Concerned with the proposed addition of the external staircase and roof terrace for our privacy.
- The current full height opaque glass panels in the east end of the 1st floor terrace provide privacy to our house and garden. This will be compromised and negated by having a staircase and landing outside of this.
- The proposed staircase is on the boundary, staircase could be repositioned.
- Stairs to second floor would look terrible and give privacy issues, the privacy screen is only chest height.

- Staircase unsightly, no other house has this to second floor or on the boundary.
- These should be considered when the house was designed and built, over development and will spoil what is currently an attractive house and impact our family's privacy.
-

Amended Plans - no representations received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15
'Supplementary Planning Guidance' comprising: Development Management Standard No.2 'Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings''
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).

Planning Assessment

Principle

The relevant issues are the effects on the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers and the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Visual amenity

The proposed staircase and changes to screen will be visible from the rear of the building on the beach in public views and also from adjacent neighbouring properties, it will also be visible from the street scene. From the front it will not be a prominent feature, being set back and subservient to the main dwelling.

The applicant has supplied photographs to show other examples on the beach of staircases to the side of dwellings adjacent to the boundary and dwellings where there are external staircases to rear balconies. This is therefore not an uncommon feature on Old Fort Road and Shoreham Beach, examples include 68, 110 Old Fort Road.

The side screen on the staircase and replacement screen on the side of the balcony is shown on the proposed plans as being cedar. This is the matching cladding material used for the dwelling house and matches the elevation. This will provide a cohesive development blending the new addition to the original building. The proposed works will not be out of keeping in character, scale or design with the existing building.

Residential amenity

Although the development will be visible from neighbouring properties, the main dwelling to be affected is no. 20 Old Fort Road to the east of the site. The proposed staircase will be adjacent to the boundary with this existing neighbouring bungalow. On balance the staircase in close proximity can be supported as the proposed screening is at such a height that when anyone is using the staircase to access the first floor balcony they will be fully screened and therefore would not overlook the side of the neighbouring bungalow or their rear garden at an elevated level. However it should be noted that the gardens along the south side of Old Fort Road are not private due to the low level boundary treatment and beach to the rear. This offers a neighbourly development sufficiently screened. The screen is solid with cedar at 2.3 metres in height from the ground to the balcony then reducing to 1.8 metres in height along the side on the balcony. The end section of the balcony is screened by a lower level glazed section to give views to the east. However this being to the end of the balcony it will not be the main used area and is therefore not likely to result in significant overlooking. This is also set in from the boundary.

The objections of the neighbouring occupiers are noted. The application has been amended to remove the roof terrace and to provide greater screening to the stairs. There are many examples of unscreened balconies along the beach and the properties are very visible from the beach itself. On balance, the proposal is not considered to result in a harmful loss of privacy for the neighbouring occupiers.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. The staircase and balcony screens shall be installed prior to the use of the staircase hereby permitted and shall remain in place at all times unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation N

1. Proactive with amendments

Case Officer: Hannah Barker Date: 31st July 2024

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 31 July 2024