Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0033/13 **Recommendation – Approve**

Site: **24 Roman Crescent Southwick Brighton West Sussex**

Proposal: **Removal of existing metal railings to east part of rear flat roof area and installation of timber trellis to both sides outside master bedroom with metal/glass railings to front of new terrace**

Date of site visit: 6 Feb 2013

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application property comprises a large detached house dating from the 1950's occupying a generous sized plot on the south side of Roman Crescent. It has been enlarged by a single-storey flat-roofed extension across the full width of the rear under planning permission SW/0341/08/TP. An unauthorised terrace/balcony has been formed on the flat roof of the extension enclosed by a glass and metal railings around the perimeter. There is access onto the balcony/terrace from a first-floor bedroom via French doors. The unauthorised terrace/balcony is the subject of an enforcement complaint AWEN/0145/12.

Permission is sought to retain the balcony/terrace on the west side of the flat roofed area with privacy screens on the east and west sides to enclose an area 4.5m deep and 4m wide. The privacy screens would consist of timber trellis fencing. The existing metal/glass railing on the east side of the flat roof area would be removed.

The site is located within the Southwick Conservation Area.

Consultations:

Adur Conservation Advisory Group (ADCAG): No objection.

Representations:

A representation has been received from the occupier of 73 Southwick Street commenting:-

- The original application made no mention of railings on top of the extension otherwise an objection would have been raised;
- The extension is large and dominates and the rear garden of 73 Southwick Street taking away light in the afternoon; it [the balcony] looks down into the garden and 4 others and takes away privacy;
- It is a huge structure with modern railings and there are no others in the area, it is out of keeping;

- Strongly object to wooden trellis as this would be of huge proportions taking away further afternoon light and more hideous than the railings;
- If permitted, others would follow suit.

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, BE6
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

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 dwelling and the Conservation Area.

Visual amenity and effect on Conservation Area

The Council has a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of enhancing or preserving the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Southwick Conservation Area is made up of several different character areas. The area enclosed by Roman Crescent, Southdown Road and Southwick Street is essentially suburban in character, made up of detached and semi-detached dwellings dating from the Victorian and Edwardian period through to the mid-C20. Roman Crescent is a relatively wide road made up of detached dwellings typically occupying generous-sized plots. The south side of the road is characterised by a group of similar Edwardian houses with distinctive colonnaded detailing on their front elevations. The application property is not one of these, dating from the mid-1950s. Whilst the dwelling has no special architectural interest, it is not unattractive and its scale and layout it is generally in keeping with the low density suburban character of this part of the Conservation Area.

A private drive separates the application property from the neighbouring 'colonnaded' style house to the west (No.14). The drive serves a number of 'backland' plots in-between Roman Crescent and Southdown Road to the south. The rear extension added to the application property (and the existing unauthorised railings) are visible from the street owing to a number of factors – the wider than average gap separating No.24 from No.14, the 'set back' of the latter owing to the curve of the road and the lack of screen planting within the front garden (which is not typical of this road in generally). The existing glass screen and modern tubular railings are modern in style, but are not particularly prominent owing to their lightweight appearance. The proposed trellis fencing would be more prominent owing to its height, more solid form and darker colour. An obscured glass privacy screen would be less noticeable – although not necessarily in keeping with the 1950s style of the host dwelling. This has been suggested, but the applicant has confirmed that a glass privacy screen is not feasible on grounds of cost. Providing the trellis

fence is of a good quality and robust construction, it could be considered adequate in visual amenity terms, appearing as an incidental and minor addition that would not detract from the overall scale, proportions or composition of the existing building or detract from the character of the Conservation Area. It is noted that ACAG has not raised any objection to the proposal.

Residential amenity

One representation has been received from the occupier of No.73 Southwick Street, adjoining to the east. No.73, along with others in Southwick Street, has a substantially smaller garden than the properties in Roman Crescent.

The part of the unauthorised terrace/balcony that is proposed to be retained is on the west side, furthest away from No.73. Whilst it is recognised that the existing unauthorised arrangement is unneighblourly and allows for views directly into the rear gardens and rear windows of No.s 73, 71 and 69 Southwick Street, this issue would be satisfactorily addressed by the proposed privacy screens. The eastern-most screen would be sited over 10m from the common boundary with No.73 and could not be considered overbearing at this distance.

There are 2 first-floor windows in the east flank wall of No.14 to the west (and rooflight windows in a ground-floor lean-to side extension). According to historic planning records the first-floor windows serve a bathroom and en-suite facility. No objection has been received from the neighbour on this side, but it is considered that the proposed privacy screen would adequately safeguard the amenities of the occupiers.

A condition of planning permission is suggested requiring the works to be undertaken before the Summer (when the terrace/balcony is more likely to be used) and requiring the existing unauthorised railings on the east side of the flat-roofed extension to be removed.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

Subject to the conditions of planning permission, the proposed development would not detract from the character or appearance of the dwelling or the Southwick Conservation Area in which it is located 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, BE6)

Subject to Conditions:-

1. The trellis screening shall consist of stained and treated oak-coloured timber trellis fencing 1700mm high (as measured from the floor of the terrace/balcony) with square pattern apertures no larger than 40mm square, with timber posts and a 50mm top rail.

2. The proposed alterations including the erection of the approved privacy screens and the removal of the existing unauthorised glass/metal screens on the east side of the roof of the rear extension shall be completed within 2 months of the date of this decision. No part of the flat roof of the extension shall be used as a balcony/terrace or sitting out area unless and until the privacy screens enclosing the east and west sides have been erected in accordance with condition 2 of this permission and the existing glass/metal screens on the east part of the flat roof have been removed. Thereafter, the privacy screens shall be retained at all times in connection with the use of the balcony/terrace or sitting out area.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, the privacy screen on the west side of the balcony/terrace/sitting out area shall be positioned inside the existing parapet wall.
4. Approved plans: -
   Site Location Plan Date Valid 11th Jan 2013
   Block Plan – Proposed Roof Terrace Date Valid 11th January 2013
   Drawing 1292012/01 Date Valid 11th January 2013

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? Y

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 21 March 2013

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 21 March 2013