Expiry Date - 08/09/2025
Extension of Time -

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0925/25 **Recommendation: – APPROVE**

Site: Flat 18 Romney Court Winchelsea Gardens Worthing

Proposal: Replacement of aluminium framed window with uPVC framed window.

Date of Site Visit: 15/07/25

Neighbours Checked: Y - Site notice displayed

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings:

The site is located to the west side of Winchelsea Gardens within a residential area of Worthing and within the Marine Gardens Conservation Area. The property comprises a three storey block of flats and the application relates to Flat 18 located on the top floor with a window to the front. 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.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for replacement of an aluminium framed window to the front of the building with a uPVC window.

The replacement window would match the style and openings of the existing window with slightly thicker frames to match the existing windows to other flats that have already been replaced in uPVC.

The replacement window would be white, double glazed uPVC.

Relevant Planning History:

Various consent for replacement windows in uPVC to other flats.

Consultations

The Worthing Society

This building, a large 1930's period block of flats, is located within the newly designated 'Marine Gardens Conservation Area' (CA) and is recorded on the Local Interest List.

I have now discussed the application with our Heritage Team and, in general, the Society would normally object to Upvc windows in a conservation area. However, in this case the building concerned has predominantly Upvc windows which were installed before the CA was designated in August 2024. Apparently, this is the case with the proximate blocks within the CA. On balance we consider the replacement of the aluminium window would be an improvement and would match the other windows in the façade. Exceptionally, therefore, the Society will not be objecting to this application.

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 the impact on the conservation area and Local Interest Building.

Visual Amenity

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.

The Conservation Area Appraisal recognises that the previous removal of crittal windows to this block has diminished the appearance of the building and supports the installation of windows of a traditional design in accordance with guidance to be issued to homeowners. It is understood that this guidance has not yet been issued.

The block of flats is prominent in the street scene and the proposed window for replacement is located to the front of the building and clearly visible. Most of the windows to this building have already been replaced in white uPVC of matching design to that proposed by this application. The result of this is that the existing aluminium window to the application flat appears out of keeping with the other windows in this elevation. Whilst it is recognised that a more holistic approach to replace all windows in the block with more traditional designs would lead to a significant enhancement to the building, the guidance for this has not yet been issued and the change of one window to match the others, as proposed by this application, is not considered to detract further from the special interest of this building. The aluminium window as existing stands out as an anomaly to the frontage and its replacement with a uPVC window of matching design to all the other windows in this façade would regain the

uniform appearance of windows to the frontage and would enhance rather than detract from the current appearance.

The replacement of one window to match the others that currently exist, is therefore considered acceptable in this particular case, however the long term plan for the block as a whole should include gradual replacement of windows with a more traditional design, in accordance with guidance to be produced.

There would be no significant harm to the character of the conservation area, the local interest building or the visual amenities of the locality as a result of this application.

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.

The proposed windows would enhance energy efficiency and greatly improve the thermal capacity of the property, enhancing the living conditions for the occupants and resulting in a sustainable development.

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to the condition:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. White uPVC windows to match existing in block

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: Amanda Haslett Date: 03/09/25

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 3 September 2025