

A04 **F/TH/23/1557**

PROPOSAL: Installation of external wall insulation, erection of roof screen, and replacement roof lining, together with alterations to windows, doors, existing balconies, and entrance

LOCATION: Kennedy House And Trove Court Newcastle Hill RAMSGATE
Kent CT11 8PE

WARD: Eastcliff

AGENT: Mr Ciaran Gallen

APPLICANT: Thanet District Council

RECOMMENDATION: Approve

Subject to the following conditions:

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

GROUND:

In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Purchase Act 2004).

2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted drawings numbered Kennedy Hous01102 Rev P01 received 07/12/2023, 05100 Rev P01, 05101 Rev P01, 05102 Rev P01, 05103 Rev P01, 05200 Rev P01, 05300 Rev P01, 05301 Rev P01 received 29/11/2023 and, Trove Court: 01102 Rev P01 received 07/12/2023,, 05100 Rev P01, 05101 Rev P01, 05102 Rev P01, 05103 Rev P01, 05200 Rev P01, 05300 Rev P01, 05301 Rev P01 received 29/11/2023.,

GROUND;

To secure the proper development of the area.

3 Prior to the commencement of the development, a noise impact assessment shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall comply with guidance found in BS5228 -1:2009+A1:2014 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites. Upon commencement of the development, work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

GROUND:

To protect the amenities of residential and nearby occupiers, in accordance with the aims of Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the guidance contained in the NPPF.

4 Prior to the commencement of construction activities, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Construction Environmental Management Plan shall include amongst other matters

- Details of: hours of construction working; measures to control noise affecting nearby residents
- Wheel cleaning/chassis cleaning facilities including access and egress locations.
- Dust control measures
- Lighting control measures
- Pollution incident control
- Arrangements for a direct and responsive site management contact for nearby occupiers during construction (signage on hoardings, newsletters, resident's liaison meetings, etc.)
- Site waste Management - Accurate waste stream identification, separation, storage, registered waste carriers for transportation and disposal at appropriate destinations.

The works shall thereafter be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, unless any variations are otherwise first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

GROUND:

To protect against harmful environmental impacts and the amenities of residential and nearby occupiers, in accordance with the aims of Policy QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the guidance contained in the NPPF.

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Kennedy House and Trove Court are a pair of large high rise tower blocks just off the entrance to Ramsgate Town Centre and are located in the hill running parallel with the Plains of Waterloo.

Both blocks are roughly rectangular in shape and stepped, and sit in close proximity to one another with some hard surfacing and parking surrounding. They sit within a heavily built up area but are the only buildings of this scale within the immediate streetscape. They sit outside but adjacent to the Ramsgate Conservation Area, and in proximity to a number of listed buildings.

The current tower blocks appear a light blue and beige colour and have a number of concrete balconies with a black framed box design and yellow screening. External windows and doors appear in white uPVC.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

F/TH/02/0561 - External alterations comprising installation of overcladding to external facade and replacement balcony balustrading. Granted 08/08/2002.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission for retrofit works for fire remediation purposes. It is stated that the existing external walls for both towers contain combustible wall insulation and needs to be addressed. It is also stated that the panels covering the balconies are likely to be constructed of combustible materials. The proposal seeks new external wall insulation, replacement windows, doors and balconies elements, a replacement roof and a number of internal upgrades to address fire regulations and correct damaged or poor condition elements.

The works would see external alterations to the appearance of the building, changing to an off-white render finish with a mixture of aluminium and fibre cement cladding in white and grey tones. A new liquid membrane would be applied to the roof and existing redundant equipment would be removed here. New screening and anti-fall barriers would be introduced and existing plant upgraded. Aluminium doors and windows would replace the existing uPVC openings and the entrance area would be upgraded.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

SP11 - Ramsgate

SP35 - Quality Development

SP36 - Conservation and Enhancement of Thanet's Historic Environment

HE02 - Development in Conservation Areas

HE03 - Heritage Assets

QD01 - Sustainable Development

QD02 - General Design Principles

QD03 - Living Conditions

NOTIFICATIONS

Letters were sent to neighbouring property occupiers, a site notice posted close to the site and an advert was posted in the local paper. One letter of objection has been received surrounding comments that the balconies would be open to the elements and not suitable for high rise accommodation.

Ramsgate Heritage and Design Forum: The massing is in two parts, should the two vertical elements have a different colour? Could the colours be warmer or more exciting? Perhaps a colour study or artist study? The options presented to residents were rather limited. Could there not be 3 variations between the 3 towers?

We have concerns due to wind noise from the vertical balcony railings and horizontal plant screening. Has a noise assessment been conducted or perhaps a mock up installed at high level? See Folkestone Acme project.

The render should be self cleaning silicone render to reduce potential staining as is evident.

CONSULTATIONS

TDC Conservation Officer: "Following a review of the proposed application I would consider there to be a neutral to positive implication to the setting and appearance of the surrounding conservation area given that its outward appearance is largely being updated aesthetically."

TDC Environmental Health: "Thank you for consulting Environmental Health on this application for which we offer the following comment in relation to noise and the construction activities of the building:

These towers are in a predominantly residential area and the proposed works are significant and may occur for an extended period of time. The construction will be occurring at height and will allow for an unrestricted distribution of sound. Consideration should be given to a noise impact assessment being undertaken. The proposed condition is.

Prior to the commencement of the development, a noise impact assessment shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall comply with guidance found in BS5228 -1:2009+A1:2014 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites. Upon commencement of the development, work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

In order to ensure that environmental effects from the proposed construction works are planned for and managed. it is appropriate that a CEMP should be submitted. It is recommended that the following condition is applied.

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The works shall thereafter be carried out at all times in accordance with the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, unless any variations are otherwise first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority."

Health and Safety Executive: "Information provided with this application appears to focus on the external wall system, including, balconies, window and door replacements, roof replacement, including new perimeter roof stand. It is unclear from the project description and the information provided as part of the application if the scope of the proposed changes goes beyond that.

It is also noted that the fire statement is incomplete and does not provide relevant fire information to the standards relating to fire safety/ approach applied (section 6 (e)). This fire safety information is necessary for HSE to complete a full assessment of a design proposal. For future reference, the fire statement document should be completed fully in line with guidance published by DLUHC, by a suitably competent person. A link to that guidance and other supplemental guidance can be accessed on Planning and fire safety - Planning and fire safety - Planning Portal.

Following a review of the information provided in the planning application, HSE is content with the fire safety design as set out in the project description, to the extent it affects land use planning considerations."

The response goes on to include comments about window replacement works with the potential to impact fire integrity, the material composition of balustrades and balconies, and the condition and location of existing hydrants, however states that these comments do not contribute to HSE's substantive response and should not be used for the purposes of decision making by the local planning authority.

KCC Highways: This development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority.

COMMENTS

This application is reported to Planning Committee as a submission made on behalf of Thanet District Council.

Principle

There is no in-principle objection to the alteration of an existing residential building.

The main considerations are the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and the living conditions of occupiers.

Character and Appearance

Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense

of place, and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and create places that are attractive, welcoming and distinctive, as well as safe, inclusive and accessible. Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan outlines that the primary aim of new development is to promote or reinforce local character and provide high quality and inclusive design that is sustainable in all other respects. Proposals should therefore relate to surrounding development, form and layout, be well designed, pay particular attention to context and identity of location, scale, massing, rhythm, density, layout and materials, and be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces. Any external spaces and landscape features should be designed as an integral part of the scheme.

The site lies adjacent to the Ramsgate Conservation Area and sits in close proximity to a number of listed buildings. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. Paragraphs 203 and 205 of the NPPF advises that LPAs should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Policy SP36 sets out that the Council will support, value and have regard to the historic or archaeological significance of Heritage Assets by protecting the historic environment from inappropriate development. Policy HE02 sets out that within conservation areas, development proposals which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area, and accord with other relevant policies of the Plan will be permitted but new development which would detract from the immediate or wider landscape setting of any part of a conservation area will not be permitted.

In terms of the external facade changes the Design and Access statement sets out that the design concept has been to create a distinctive dark base, using rainscreen cladding, to visually link with surrounding low rise buildings, with a lighter colour palette to the upper floors. It is stated that three design options were presented to the residents of the building and wider community consultation has taken place, therefore there is general community support for the current proposal. The colours and materials selected would create a modern appearance. The tower blocks are seen in their own context and therefore whilst the changes would not necessarily assimilate with the surrounding finishes and appearances of nearby buildings, the colours chosen and use of panels would have some integration with nearby buildings but the overall appearance would be self-supporting. The continued vertical focus and addition of softer colours to the upper floors would help break up the appearance of the building and the use of vertical banding and the loss of horizontal banding would create more visual consistency.

The addition of external wall insulation would see an increase in the overall projection of the outer walls by around 0.3m. This would be a marginal change visually and unlikely to result in any unacceptable impact on the appearance of the area.

The proposed balcony changes will see an increase to the overall width of each, the removal of the box like appearance, the use of blue metal railings for Kennedy House and green metal railings for Trove Court, with solid screening elements to the sides and part of the front across each. A small section of the front of the balcony would remain open. Again the buildings would be seen autonomously and although an unusual feature, the design has

been informed by the preferred choices selected by the community and those that took part in the public consultation.

Windows and doors would be replaced and the existing uPVC would be upgraded to light grey aluminium frames. A number of glass louvred vents would replace existing windows and their form would be long rectangular panels in a run of four. Although this glazing arrangement would somewhat change the appearance of the building, the run of panels continues the vertical appearance and this is considered to be acceptable. Given the proximity to the historic environment, aluminium is preferable to uPVC and the Council's Conservation Officer considers the proposal to be positive.

A number of upgrades to the entrance areas of each block would be undertaken and include creating an angled entrance and upgrading the existing glazing. Blocks of colour would be used from the balconies and other features across the facades. These changes are likely to offer a more appealing entranceway and larger space and are considered to be acceptable.

It is proposed to change the orientation of the name identifying each of the buildings by turning it to face the entrance and have the words follow each other. This is not likely to materially affect the appearance of the building or wider area and is considered to be acceptable.

The roof alterations would see the erection of a perimeter screen to support working with the plant at this height. Although adding additional built form, the need for this element has been clearly set out and the horizontal emphasis would help to prevent any sense of additional bulk. The overall roof area is not prominently viewed from the ground given the scale of the towers, however some longer distance views from the views from the east may be possible. The overall finish and colour would be light to match the upper storeys, and would replace the existing railing system. Overall these works are not considered significantly harmful. The existing roof covering would be upgraded and replaced with a warm roof system. These changes are unlikely to be appreciable from the surrounding area.

On balance, the works are considered to be acceptable and comply with the spirit of policies SP36, QD02, HE02, and HE03 of the Thanet Local Plan, and the guidance of the NPPF.

Living Conditions

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 135 states that decisions should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for future users. Policy QD02 of the Thanet Local Plan outlines that new development should be compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces, and should be inclusive in its design for all users. It should improve people's quality of life by creating safe and accessible environments and promote public safety and security. Policy QD03 outlines that new development must not lead to unacceptable living conditions through overlooking, noise, vibrations, light pollution, overshadowing, loss of natural light or a sense of enclosure. Policy QD01 of the Thanet Local Plan sets out that all new buildings and conversions of existing buildings must be

designed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and have resilience to function in a changing climate and will be required to make the best use of solar energy, passive heating and cooling, natural light, natural ventilation and landscaping.

The scheme proposes a number of works to address fire safety. This is a material planning consideration and LPAs are required to consult the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on any proposals for works to buildings of this scale. A fire statement has been provided by the applicant and reviewed by HSE who agree that the scheme can progress to the next stage.

In terms of the impact on the works on neighbouring property occupiers, most of the works would be minimal and any changes to the thickness of the building or extent of balconies would be modest. The building thickness would increase by 0.3m which would likely be imperceptible to most neighbouring occupiers. The balconies would increase slightly from a 2.4m walk out space (length) to 2.9m. The building is set back away from nearby properties. All balconies would still be inset from the wall edge and therefore no new harm is expected to occur as a result. The roof alterations and provision of screening would be at a height that would not be expected to be experienced by neighbouring properties.

Ramsgate Heritage and Design Forum have raised concerns that wind noise could be problematic from the design of the proposed balconies. This could be addressed through suggested conditions below.

In terms of any impact on the current occupiers of the building, works are intended to be undertaken while the tower block is occupied. There are 90 units here over 16 floors across each tower block, and the works have the potential to cause significant disruption. There are a number of potential matters that require consideration. These include ensuring the continued ability of occupiers to retain heat and a reasonable standard of living whilst works are undertaken, along with the potential for noise, dust, vibrations and general disturbance to occupiers and nearby occupiers. The Council's Environmental Health Team have raised concerns about the height at which works would be undertaken and the potential for the unrestricted distribution of sound. They have therefore suggested conditions surrounding the submission of a noise impact assessment and a construction management plan. Both of these are considered to be reasonable and have been agreed to by the applicant.

Overall the works would see thermal upgrades and environmental improvements to the building and subject to the above conditions and a satisfactory noise and construction management plan, the works are likely to comply with the aims of policies QD01, QD02 and QD03 of the Thanet Local Plan and the aims of the NPPF.

Conclusion

Overall the proposed works would see the upgrading of two outdated tower blocks to create more resilient buildings, and a contemporary appearance. The site is in close proximity to the historic environment, however the works would be seen in the unique context of the site itself, and would have some integration with the wider area. There is general community support for the design that has been chosen and the works are not considered likely to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area or nearby heritage assets.

The HSE have considered the design proposal and agree that the scheme can progress to the next stage.

The works have the potential to cause significant noise and disturbance more widely, and to impact the current living conditions of those living in the tower block during construction. As a result a number of safeguarding conditions are recommended and subject to these, the works are considered to be acceptable.

Case Officer

Vicky Kendell-Bryant

TITLE:

F/TH/23/1557

Project

Kennedy House And Trove Court Newcastle Hill RAMSGATE Kent CT11
8PE

